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SIR PHILIP SIDNEY.

APOLOGIE FOR POETRIE.

1595.

Edited by EDWARD ARBER, F.S.A.

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BIRMINGHAM

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1 April, 1868.

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| Poetry is of all human learning the most ancient, and of most fatherly antiquity. From its sprang all other knowledge. | 19 |
| Poetry is so universal, that no learned nation despises it, and no barbarous nation is without it. | 20 |
| <i>Etymology of Poetry, pp. 23—29. The Psalms [=songs]</i> | 22 |
| Both Romans and Greeks gave divine names to it, the one of prophesying, the other of making | 23 |
| Indeed, that name of making is fit for Poesy. Whereas other arts retain themselves within their subject, and receive as it were their being from it; the Poet only, brings his own stuff, does not learn a conceit out of a matter, but makes matter for a conceit | 24 |
| Poesy is an art of imitation, for so Aristotle terms it in his word <i>Mimesis</i> , i. e. a representing, counterfeiting or figuring forth; to speak metaphorically, a speaking picture: with this end to teach and delight. | 24 |
| Of this there have been three kinds. 1. Sacred poetry, in the Scriptures and hymns to the Heathen gods. | 26 |
| 2. Philosophical poetry. 3. 'The right poets,' they which most properly do imitate to teach and delight. | 27 |
| 'Verse is but an ornament and no cause to Poetry.' | 28 |
| Although indeed, the Senate of Poets have chosen verse as their fittest raiment; meaning, that as in matter they passed all in all, so in manner to go beyond them | 29 |
| <i>Anatomy of the effects of Poetry, pp. 29—43.</i> 'This purifying of wit, enriching of memory, enabling of judgement and enlarging of conceit, which commonly we call learning' | 29 |
| The ending end of all earthly learning is virtuous action. In this most excellent work, Poetry is the most excellent workman | 29 |
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CHRONICLE

of

some of the principal events
in the

LIFE, WORKS, and TIMES

of

Master, afterwards Sir PHILIP SIDNEY,

Courtier, Ambassador, Poet, Romancist, Critic, and Soldier.

* Probable or approximate dates.

1553. July 6. Mary succeeds to the crown.

1554. July 25.
Nov. 29.

Queen Mary marries Philip, King of Spain.
PHILIP SIDNEY 'was son of Sir Hen. Sidney by the lady Mary his wife, eldest daughter of Joh. Dudley duke of Northumberland, was born, as 'tis supposed, at Penshurst in Kent, 29 Nov. 1554, and had his Christian name given to him by his father, from K. Philip, then lately married to Queen Mary.'—*Wood, Ath. Oxon.* i. 517. *Ed.* 1813.
Philip is the eldest of three sons, and four daughters.

1558. Feb. 17. Elizabeth begins to reign.

1560.

Sir Henry Sidney is made Lord President of Wales, which office he holds till his death. He resides, when in the Principality, chiefly at Ludlow. He is three times Lord Deputy of Ireland, between 1565-67, 1568-71 and 1577-78. He is installed K. G. May 14. 1564.

1564.

Oct. 17.
Oct. 9.

Philip Sidney and Fulke Greville, both of the same age, and who became friends for life, enter Shrewsbury School on the same day.—'Anno Domini 1564. 16 Cal. Nov.

Philippus Sidney filius et haeres Henrici Sidney Militis de Pensarst in Comit. Cantiae, et Domini Praesidis confinium Cambriae, nec non Ordinis Garterii Militis.

Foulkhus Greyvell filius et haeres Foulki Greyveli Armigeri de Beauchamp Courte in Comit. Warwici. eodem die. School Register: see *Sidneiana* Roxburghe Clube 1837. Fulke Greville thus testifies of his schoolfellow "of whose Youth I will report no other wonder, but thus: That though I lived with him, and knew him from a child, yet I never knew him other than a man: with such staiednesse of mind, lovely, and familiar gravity, as carried grace, and reverence above greater years. His talk ever of knowledge, and his very play tending to enrich his mind: So as even his teachers found something in him to observe, and learn, above that which they had usually read, or taught. Which eminence, by nature, and industry, made his worthy Father stile Sir Philip in my hearing (though I unseen) *Lumen familiae suae.*" F. Greville, in his posthumous *Life of Sir P. Sidney*, p. 7. *Ed.* 1652.

At Shrewsbury School.

At Oxford.

1568* Midsummer.
Oct. 13

"While he was very young, he was sent to Christ Ch. to be improved in all sorts of learning, and was contemporary there with Rich Carew author of *The Survey of Cornwall*, where continuing till he was about 17 years of age, under the tuition of Dr. Tho. Thornton, canon of that house."—*Wood, idem.*

Travelling Abroad.

1572. May 25. The Queen grants Philip Sidney, license to go abroad
 æt. 17. with three servants and four horses: (May 26) Leaves
 London, in the train of the Earl of Lincoln, Ambassador
 to the French King: (Aug. 9) Charles ix. makes him
 one of the gentlemen of his Chamber: (Aug. 24) The
 Massacre of St. Bartholomew. Sidney being in the
 house of the English Ambassador, Sir Francis Walsing-
 ham, is safe: He however soon leaves Paris, journeys
 by Heidelberg to Frankfort, where he meets Hubert
 Languet, æt. 54. He stays at Frankfort about nine
 months. They two then go to Vienna: where, after some
 trips to Hungary, Sidney leaves Languet, and spends
 eight months in Italy; chiefly in Venice, Padua, and
 Genoa. He returns to Vienna in Nov. Spends his
 1574. winter there (see p. 19), and coming home through the
 1575. Low Countries; reaches England (May 31. 1575).

Ambassador.

1575. æt. 20. Introduced to Court, by his uncle, the E. of Leicester.
 See p. 6.
 July 9-27. Is at the famous reception given by his uncle to the
 Queen, at Kenilworth. The Court moves to Chartley
 castle, where Philip is supposed first to have seen *Stella*
 (Penelope, æt. 13, daughter of Lord Essex, and after-
 wards Lady Rich). The sonnets *Astrophel and Stella*
 go on for the next five or six years.
 1577. æt. 22. Sidney is sent as Ambassador, with messages of con-
 Feb. *22. dolence to Rodolph II. the new Emperor of Germany, at
 June 8. Prague; and to the two sons of the Frederic III. late
 Elector Palatine: viz. Lewis (now Elector) and John
 Casimir. at Heidelberg.
 1578. May. On the Court coming to his uncle's, at Wanstead, Sidney
 writes a masque *The Lady of the May*.
 Sidney becomes acquainted with Gabriel Harvey, and
 through him with Edmund Spenser.
 1579. August. Stephen Gosson publishes the *The Schoole of Abuse*.
 Oct. 16. E. Spenser writes to G. Harvey, Sidney's idea of it.
 Dec. [Ent. Stat. Hall 5 Dec.] Spenser's *Shepherds Calendar*.
 1580. Sidney writes to the Queen, against her marrying the
 Duke of Anjou.
 Jointly with his sister Mary, translates *Psalms of David*.
 Writes *The Arcadia*.

Chiefly at Court.

1580. Oct. 18. Sidney writing from Leicester House, to his brother
 æt. 25. Robert, æt. 17. (afterwards Earl of Leicester) then
 travelling in Germany; gives him, in a long and brotherly
 letter, his ideas on the study of history. This confi-
 dential letter shows that Sidney's mind was, at this time,
 much occupied with the consideration of subjects dealt
 with in the *Apologie*, to which it may be considered as a
 forerunner.

"For the Method of writing Historie, *Boden* hath
 written at large, yow may reade him, and gather out of
 many Wordes some Matter. This I thinke in Haste, a
 Story is either to be considered as a Storie, or as a
 Treatise, which, besides that, addeth many Things for
 Profite and Ornament; as a Story, he is nothing but a
 Narration of Things done, with the Beginings, Cawses,
 and Appendences thereof. . . . In that Kinde yow
 haue principally to note the Examples of Vertue or Vice,
 with their good or evell Successes, the Establishments
 or Ruines of great Estates, with the Cawses, the Tyme,
 and Circumstances of the Lawes then write of, the
 Entrings and Endings of Warrs, and therein, the Strata-
 gems against the Enemy, and the Discipline vpon the
 Soldiour; and thus much as a very Historiographer.

Chiefly at Court.

Besides this, the Historian makes himself a Discourser for Profite, and an Orator, yea a Poet sometimes for Ornament. An Orator, in making excellent Orations, *ere nata*, which are to be marked, but marked with the Note of Rhetoricall Remembrances: A Poet in painting forth the Effects, the Motions, the Whisperings of the People, which though in Disputation, one might say were true, yet who will make them well, shall finde them taste of a Poetical Vaine, and in that Kinde are gallantly to be marked, for though perchance they were not so, yet it is enough they might be so. The last Poynt which tendes to teach Profite, is of a Discourser, which Name I giue to who soeuer speaks, *Non simpliciter de facto, sed de qualitatibus et circumstantijs factj*; and that is it which makes me, and many others, rather note much with our Penn then with our Minde. . . . This write I to yow in greate Hast, of Method without Method, but with more Leysure and Studie (if I doe not finde some Booke that satisfies) I will venter to write more largely vnto yow." . . . Arthur Collin's *Letters and Memorials of State*, i. 283-5. Ed. 1746.

1581. Jan. 16-Mar. 18. Parliament sits. Sidney is for the first time a Member.
 Sept. 30. Languet dies at Antwerp.
 Sidney writes *An Apologie for Poetrie*.
 1583. Jan. 8. The Queen knights him.
 * Mar. æt. 29. He maries Frances, daughter of Sir F. Walsingham.
 1584. Nov. 23.-1585. Mar. 29. Parliament sits. Sidney a second time a member.
 Writes *Discourse in Defence of the Earl of Leicester*.
 His daughter Elizabeth born [afterward the Countess of Rutland].
 Projects an expedition to America, with Sir F. Drake.

Governor of Flushing.

- Nov. 7. Is appointed Governor of Flushing: Nov. 16. Leaves England for the last time: Nov. 21. Assumes his office.
 1586. May 5. His father Sir H. Sidney dies at Worcester.
 July 6. Sidney, with 3000 men, surprises Axel.
 Aug. 9. His mother Lady Mary Sidney dies.
 Sept. 22. At the fight at Zutphen, Sidney 'receyved a sore Wounde upon his Thighe, three Fingers above his Knee, the Bone broken quite in Peeeces. . . . He was carried afterwards in my barge to Arnheim.' E. of Leicester. See Collin's *Memoirs of the Sidneys*, p. 105.
 Oct. 17. Sidney lingers 26 days. His wife and brother join
 2 p.m. æt. 31. him. His last words were—*Love my Memorie, cherish my Friends, their Faith to me may assure you they were honest. But above all, govern your Will and Affections, by the Will and Word of your Creator; in me, beholding the end of this World, withall her Vanities*.

His body was removed (Oct. 24) to Flushing; embarked (Nov. 1) there for conveyance to London; landed (Nov. 5) at Tower-hill, and taken to a house in the Minories, without Aldgate: where it remained, until the public funeral (Feb. 16. 1587) at St. Paul's. England goes into mourning for him.

In place of fuller details of Sidney's life, which will be found in the works of A. Collins, Dr. T. Zouch, and H. R. F. Bourne, we may obtain a better impression of his character, by adducing the independent testimony of four contemporaries, all competent to know the truth, and none apparently exaggerating it.

The first three come to us through Fulke Greville. See *Life*, pp. 31-34.

1. William of Nassau, 'William the Silent,' Prince of Orange, requested Greville to tell his Queen "that if he could judge, her Majesty had one of the ripest, and greatest Counsellors of Estate in Sir Philip Sidney, that at this day lived in Europe: to the triall of which hee [the Prince] was pleased to leave his owne credit engaged, untill her Majesty might please to employ this Gentleman, either amongst her friends or enemies."

2. Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, his uncle, "told me (after Sir *Philip*, and not long before his own death) that when he undertook the government of the Low Countries, he carryed his Nephew over with him, as one amongst the rest, not only despising his youth for a Counsellor, but withall bearing a hand over him as a forward young man. Notwithstanding in short time he saw this Sun so risen above his Horizon, that both he and all his Stars were glad to fetch light from him. And in the end acknowledged that he held up the honor of his casual authority by him, whilst he lived, and found reason to withdraw himself from that burthen, after his death."

3. Sir Francis Walsingham, his Father-in-law "that wise and active Secretarie often confessed to my self, that his *Philip* did so far overshoot him in his own Bow, as those friends which at first were Sir *Philip's* for this Secretaries sake, within a while became so fully owned, and possest by Sir *Philip*, as now he held them at the second hand, by his Son-in-laws native courtesie."

4. Sir Robert Naunton [b. 1563,—d. Mar. 27, 1635], Master of the Court of Wards, in his posthumous work, entitled *Fragmenta Regalia, or Observations on the late Queen Elizabeth, her times and favourites* [First edition 1641, corrupt. Second edition 1642], gives us the following clear though brief account of Sidney. It is the best contemporary sketch of him that has come down to us.

"He was sonne to Sir *Henry Sydney*, Lord Deputy of *Ireland*, and President of *VVales*, a person of great parts, and in no mean grace with the Queen : his mother was sister to my Lord of *Leicester*, from whence we may conjecture, how the Father stood up in the place of honour, and employment, so that his descent was apparently noble on both sides : For his education, it was such as travell, and the University could afford, or his Tutors infuse, for after an incredible proficiency in all the species of Learning, he left the Academicall life for that of the Court, whither he came by his Vncles invitation, famed afore-hand by a noble report of his accomplishments, which together with the state of his person, framed by a naturall propension to Arms, he soon attracted the good opinion of all men, and was so highly prized in the good opinion of the Queen, that she thought the Court deficient without him : And whereas (through the fame of his deserts) he was in the election for the Kingdome of *Pole*, she refused to further his advancement, not out of emulation, but out of fear to lose the jewell of her times : He married the daughter and sole heir of Sir *Francis Walsingham*, then Secretary of State, a Lady destined to the Bed of honour, who (after his deplorable death at *Zutphen* in the Netherlands, where he vvvas Governour of *Flushing*, at the time of his Vncles being there) vvvas married to my Lord of *Essex*, and since his death, to my Lord of Saint *Albons*, all persons of the svvord, and other vvwise of great honour and vertue.

They have a very quaint and factious figment of him, That *Mars* and *Mercury* fell at variance vvwhose servant he should be ; And there is an *Epi-grammist* that saith, That Art and Nature had spent their excellencies in his fashioning, and fearing that they should not end what they begun, they bestowed him on Fortune, and Nature stood musing, and amazed to behold her own work. But these are the petulancies of Poets.

Certain it is, He was a noble and matchlesse Gentleman, and it may be justly said without hyperbolies of fiction, as it was of *Cato Vticensis*, that he seemed to be born to that onely which he went about. *Versatilis ingenii*, as *Plutarch* hath it, but to speak more of him, were to make him lesse." pp. 18—19. Ed. 1642.

At p. 17. of the same work, he gives us an insight of Elizabeth's ideas on Sidney's death.

"I can here adde a true, and no impertinent Story, and that of the last *Mountioy*, who having twice or thrice stol[e]n away into *Brittain[y]* (where under Sir *Iohn Norris* he had then a Company) without the Queen's leave and privy ; she sent a Messenger unto him, with a strict charge to the Generall to see him sent home : when he came into the Queens presence, she fell into a kinde of reviling, demanding how he durst go over without her leave ; Serve me so (quoth she) once more, and I will lay you fast enough for running ; You will never leave it untill you are knockt on the head, as that inconsiderate fellow *Sidney* was : You shall go when I send you, in the mean time see that you lodge in the Court (which was then at *VVhite-Hall*) where you may follow your Book, read and discourse of the Wars."

AN APOLOGIE FOR POETRIE.

INTRODUCTION.



THE reference, at page 62, to Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* as printed; proves incontestably, that Sidney wrote his *Apologie* subsequent to the 5th December, 1579, the date of the licensing upon entry at Stationer's Hall, of Spenser's work; the first edition of which bears the date of 1579, the second 1581, and the third 1586.

The earliest date assignable to the present reprint is therefore 1580. Some time should, however, be allowed for the *Shepherd's Calendar* to attain to its acknowledged reputation. The date usually given for the composition of the *Apologie for Poetrie*, viz., 1581, may therefore be taken as approximately correct.

For the motive to its production is known. It is a carefully prepared answer to portions of two works dedicated to Sidney, by another poet, Stephen Gosson; who had but recently forsaken the Stage for the Pulpit. These works were *The Schoole of Abuse*, which appeared about August 1579, and *An Apologie of the Schoole of Abuse*, which was published in the following November.

Edmund Spenser, writing from Leicester House, on the 16th October of the same year, to his friend Gabriel Harvey at Cambridge, incidentally gives us Sidney's opinion of Gosson's first work.

"Newe Bookes I heare of none, but only of one, that writing a certaine Booke, called *The Schoole of Abuse*, and dedicating it to Maister Sidney, was for hys labor scorned: if at leaste it be in the goodnesse

of that nature to scorne. Suche follie is it, not to regarde aforehande the inclination and qualitie of him, to whom we dedicate oure Bookes.”*

The latest date that can possibly be assigned to this work, is 16th November, 1585, when Sir P. Sidney left England for the last time. The probability however is, that the vindication followed soon upon the attack.

It were an easy task, to trace in detail the line of assault and defence; but for this we have here no space. Both works being now within easy reach of all, such a comparison may be made by any. It will be better to rise from the temporal controversy to the general principles discussed in the present work: merely noting that the ultimate point at issue between Sidney and Goffon, seems to have been, whether uncleanness, falsity, and effeminacy were separable or inseparable from poetry.

The *Apologie* is four times the length of those portions of Goffon's tracts which dealt with the abuses of Poetry. For Sidney took advantage of the occasion, ‘with quiet judgment looking a little deeper into it,’ to establish, to his own satisfaction at least, the reasons for the existence at all of Poetry, and the demonstrations of its superlative excellence. Some of these apply less forcibly now than in his own time, through the general spread of the power of reading among the people; but there is much exposition of that which will remain for all time.

A book of criticism on poetry is itself but a textbook of further endless critical discussion. Anything like a consideration here of the subject-matter of the *Apologie* is not possible to us: but it may be well to notice Sidney's use of the word Poet and its modern acceptance.

* *Three proper and wittie, familiar Letters*; by IMMERITO [Spenser]

and G. H. p. 54. London [*Ent. Stat. Hall*, 30 June] 1580.

Sidney would have called Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, Fénelon's *Telemachus*, and Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, poems. He designates Xenophon's *Cyropædia* 'an absolute Heroic poem.'* Accepting the word Poet in its original and universal sense of maker; he says 'There haue beene many most excellent Poets, that neuer verified.'* 'One may bee a Poet without versing, and a versifier without Poetry;† 'Verse being but an ornament and no cause to Poetry:‡' and gives this criterion, 'It is that sayning notable images of vertues, vices, or what els, with that delightfull teaching which must be the right describing note to know a Poet by.†' So that in the *Apologie*, Sidney is really defending the whole art and craft of Feigning.

The science of definitions progressed after Sidney's death; and the Idea of Poet became limited to that of Imaginator in verse. Ben Jonson, in a posthumous work—printed sixty years later than the composition of the *Apologie*—entitled *Timber: or Discoveries; Made vpon Men and Matter: as they have flow'd out of his daily Readings; or had their reflux to his peculiar Notion of the Times*, proposes and answers three questions: and in so doing, establishes and expresses 'the modern limitation of the Idea.

What is a Poet?

"A Poet is that, which by the Greeks is call'd κατ' ἐξοχὴν, ὁ Ποιητής, a Maker, or a fainer: His Art, an Art of imitation, or faining; expressing the life of man in fit measure, numbers, and harmony, according to *Aristotle*: From the word ποιεῖν, which signifies to make or fayne. Hence, hee is call'd a Poet, not hee which writeth in measure only; but that fayneth and formeth a fable, and writes things like the Truth. For, the Fable and Fiction is (as it were) the forme and Soule of any Poeticall worke, or Poeme.

* p. 28.

† p. 49.

‡ p. 29.

What meane you by a Poeme ?

A *Poeme* is not alone any worke, or composition of the Poets in many or few verses ; but even one alone verse sometimes makes a perfect *Poeme*. As, when *Aeneas* hangs up, and consecrates the Armes of *Abas*, with this Inscription ;

*Aeneas hæc de Danaïs victoribus arma.** And calls it a *Poeme* or *Carmen*. Such are those in *Martiall*.

Omnia, Castor, emis : sic fiet, ut omnia vendas.

And *Pauper videri Cinna vult, et est pauper.†*

So were *Horace* his *Odes* call'd, *Carmina* ; his *Lirick*, Songs. And *Lucretius* designes a whole booke, in his sixt :

Quod in primo quæque carmine claret.

And anciently, all the Oracles were call'd, *Carmina* ; or, what ever Sentence was express'd, were it much, or little, it was call'd, an *Epick*, *Dramatick*, *Lirike*, *Elegiacke*, or *Epigrammatike Poeme*.

But, how differs a Poeme from what wee call Poesy ?

A *Poeme*, as I have told you is the worke of the Poet ; the end, and fruit of his labour, and studye. *Poesy* is his skill, or Crafte of making ; the very Fiction it selfe, the reason, or forme of the worke. And these three voices differ, as the thing done, the doing, and the doer ; the thing fain'd, the faining, and the fainer : so the *Poeme*, the *Poesy*, and the *Poet*."‡

It is to be desired that that word *Feigner* were releas'd from its present degradation ; and that ennobled, it might become the modern equivalent to *Sidney's* use of the word *Poet* :—a generic term embracing Poets, Allegorists, Fabulists, Romancists, Novelists ; all who "imitate to teach and delight, and to imitate, borrow nothing of what is, hath been, or shall be : but range onely rayned with learned discretion, into the diuine consideration of what may be, and should be."§

* *Virgilius Aeneid*, lib. 3.

† *Lib. 8, Epig.* 19.

‡ *Workes*, ii. 125, 126. Ed. 1641.

§ p. 28.

Sidney's want of appreciation either of the difficulty or excellence of great Prose—for he seems to have thought 'the weighing of each word in just proportion, according to the dignity of the subject' peculiar to verse; and the dissatisfaction of himself and Goffon in English poetry; must be considered in connection with the dates of their respective compositions. They were both standing on the very threshold of our modern national literature. The men were then alive, who should, within a generation—within the span of Goffon's life, for Sidney was prematurely cut off—do more to fix our language and to immortalize our literature, than had been or has since been done. The golden age of English song was just beginning. Shakespeare and Spenser, the founders of two distinct schools of poetry; Ben Jonson, Fairefax, and a host of minor dramatists, sonneteers, translators, and the like; endowed England with noble Verse. Hooker, Knolles, Bacon, Raleigh, the Translators of the authorized English version of the Scriptures, and many others of lesser degree, gave us a not less worthy Prose. The intellectual life of that generation is a prodigy in our history. What other Christian country has produced three contemporaries, such as Shakespeare, Spenser, and Bacon? It was an age not only of discovery all the world round; but of high attainment to new truths both in fact and opinion: not only of the establishment of new processes of arriving at Truth; but also of the invention of new forms for its expression. All that is romantic, chivalrous, fresh, clusters and concentrates round the last of the Tudors. With the incoming of the Stuarts, with the passing away of that generation, English History begins to become flat and stale, soon to pass into the storm of the Civil Wars, in the midst of which, this outburst of the true old chivalry finally dies out.

But from Goffon and Sidney all this was hidden. They could only look back over the dreariness of English poetry to Chaucer and Gower: and there was nothing to show, that the future might not be even as the past.

Accepting their works as the current criticism of the day ; we may obtain a measure of the originality of these after-writers. In nothing is this more conspicuous, than in the doctrine of the Unities of action, time and place, in dramatic composition ; set forth by Aristotle, and reasserted most strongly, at page 63 of the present work. This doctrine the subsequent English dramatists refused to obey as a compulsory law ; for recognising unity of action as the most obligatory, they neglected or used the other two, at their will and pleasure.

One parting testimony. The *Apologie* bears abundant evidence to the ethereal refinement of Sidney's nature, and to his ecstatic delight in Poesy ; in the epithets and epithetic phrases he gives 'to the peerlesse Poet.' He but describes himself, in describing David, as 'a passionate louer, of that vnspcakable and euerlasting beautie to be seene by the eyes of the minde, onely cleered by fayth.*' Adopting his own definition of Poesy, may we not, in some degree at least, apply to him, his own description of 'our Poet the Monarch.'

"He dooth not only show the way, but giueth so sweete a prospect into the way, as will intice any man to enter into it. Nay, he dooth as if your iourney should lye through a fayre Vineyard, at the first giue you a cluster of Grapes : that full of that taste, you may long to passe further. He beginneth not with obscure definitions, which must blur the margent with interpretations, and load the memory with doubtfulnessse : but hee commeth to you with words sent in delightfull proportion, either accompanied with, or prepared for the well inchaunting skill of Musicke ; and with a tale forsooth he commeth vnto you : with a tale which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney corner. And pretending no more, doth intende the winning of the mind from wickednesse to vertue."†

* p. 24.

† p. 40.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.

AN APOLOGIE FOR POETRIE.

* Editions not seen.

(a) Issues in the Author's life time.

None

(b) Issues since the Author's death.

I. As a *separate publication*.

1. 1595. London. *Editio princeps*: see title on page 15.
1 vol. 4to.
 20. 1752. Glasgow. 'The Defence of Poesy' by Sir Philip Sidney, Knt.
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AN
APOLOGIE
for Poetrie.

Written by the right noble, vertuous, and learned Sir Phillip
Sidney, *Knight*.

Odi profanum vulgus, et arceo

AT LONDON,

Printed for *Henry Olney*, and are to be sold at
his shop in *Paules Church-yard*, at the signe
of the *George*, neere to *Cheap-gate*.

Anno. 1595.

To the Reader.

THE stormie Winter (deere Chyldren of the Muses, which hath so long held backe the glorious Sunshine of diuine Poesie, is heere by the sacred pen-breathing words of diuine Sir *Philip Sidney*, not onely chased from our fame-inuiting Clyme, but vtterly for euer banisht eternitie: then graciously regreet the perpetuall spring of euer-growing inuention, and like kinde Babes, either enabled by wit or power, help to support me poore Midwife, whose daring aduenture, hath deliuered from Obliuions wombe, this euer-to-be-admired wits miracle. Those great ones, who in themselves haue interr'd this blessed innocent, wil with *Aejculapius* condemne me as a detractor from their Deities: those who Prophet-like haue but heard preface of his coming, wil (if they wil doe wel) not onely defend, but praise mee, as the first publike bewrayer of Poesies *Mefsias*. Those who neither haue seene, thereby to interre, nor heard, by which they might be inflamed with desire to see, let them (of duty) plead to be my Champions, sith both theyr sight and hearing, by mine incurring blame is seasoned. Excellent Poesie, (so created by this Apologie,) be thou my Defendresse; and if any wound mee, let thy beautie (my soules Adamant) recure mee: if anie commend mine endeuored hardiment, to them commend thy most diuinest fury as a winged encouragement; so shalt thou haue deuoted to thee, and to them obliged

Henry Olney.

Foure Sonnets written by *Henrie Constable*
to Sir *Phillip Sidney*s soule.

G iue pardon (bleffed Soule) to my bold cries
If they (importund) interrupt thy song,
Which now with ioyfull notes thou sing'st, among
The Angel-Quiristers of heau'nly skyes:
Giue pardon eake (sweet Soule) to my flow cries,
That since I saw thee now it is so long,
And yet the teares that vnto thee belong,
To thee as yet they did not sacrifice:
I did not know that thou wert dead before,
I did not feele the grieve I did susteine,
"The greater stroke astonisheth the more,
"Astonishment takes from vs fence of paine,
I stood amaz'd when others teares begun,
And now begin to weepe, when they haue doone.

S weet Soule which now with heau'nly songs doost tel
Thy deare Redeemers glory, and his prayse,
No meruaile though thy skilful Muse, assayes
The songs of other soules there to excell:
For thou didst learne to sing diuinely well,
Long time before thy fayre, and glittering rayes
Encreas'd the light of heau'n, for euen thy layes
Most heauenly were, when thou on earth didst dwel:
When thou didst on the earth sing Poet-wise,
Angels in heau'n pray'd for thy company,
And now thou sing'st with Angels in the skies,
Shall not all Poets praise thy memory?
And to thy name shall not their works giue fame
When as their works be sweetned by thy name?

EVEN as when great mens heires cannot agree :
 So eu'ry vertue now for part of thee doth fue,
 Courage prooues bythy death thy hart to be his due,
 Eloquence claimes thy tongue, and so doth courtesy,
 Inuention knowledge fues, Iudgment fues memory,
 Each faith thy head is his, and what end shall ensue
 Of this strife know I not, but this I know for true,
 That whosoever gaines the fute, the losse haue wee
 Wee, (I meane all the world) the losse to all pertaineth,
 Yea they which gaine doe loose, and onely thy
 foule gaineth,
 For loosing of one life, two liues are gained then :
 Honor thy courage mou'd, courage thy death did
 giue,
 Death, courage, honor, makes thy foule to liue,
 Thy foule to liue in heau'n, thy name in tongues of men.

GREAT *Alexander* then did well declare
 How great was his vnited Kingdomes might,
 When eu'ry Captaine of his Army might
 After his death with mighty Kings compare :
 So now we see after thy death, how far
 Thou dost in worth surpasse each other Knight,
 When we admire him as no mortall wight,
 In whom the least of all thy vertues are :
 One did of *Macedon* the King become,
 Another sat in the *Egiptian* throne,
 But onely *Alexanders* selfe had all :
 So curteous some, and some be liberall,
 Some witty, wise, valiaunt, and learned some,
 But King of all the vertues thou alone.

Henry Constable.

An Apologie for Poetrie.



When the right vertuous *Edward VVotton*, and I, were at the Emperors Court together, wee gaue our selues to learne horfemanship of *Iohn Pietro Pugliano* : one that with great commendation had the place of an Esquire in his stable. And hee, according to he fertlilnes of the Italian wit, did not onely asoord vs the demonstration of his practife, but sought to enrich our mindes with the contemplations therein, which hee thought most precious. But with none I remember mine eares were at any time more loden, then when (either angred with slowe paiment, or mooued with our learner-like admiration,) he exercised his speech in the prayse of his facultie. Hee sayd, Souldiours were the noblest estate of mankinde, and horfemen, the noblest of Souldiours. Hee sayde, they were the Maisters of warre, and ornaments of peace : speedy goers, and strong abiders, triumphers both in Camps and Courts. Nay, to so vnbeleued a poynt hee proceeded, as that no earthly thing bred such wonder to a Prince, as to be a good horfeman. Skill of gouernment, was but a Pedanteria in comparison : then would hee adde certaine prayses, by telling what a peerlesse beast a horse was. The onely seruiceable Courtier without flattery, the beast of most beutie, faithfulness, courage, and such more, that if I had not beene a peece of a Logician before I came to him, I think he would haue perswaded mee to haue wished my selfe a horse. But thus much at least with his no few words hee draue into me, that selfe-loue is better then any gilding to make that seeme gorgious, wherein our selues are parties. VVherein, if *Pugliano* his strong

affection and weake arguments will not fatisfie you, I wil giue you a neerer example of my felfe, who (I knowe not by what mischance) in these my not old yeres and idelest times, hauing flipt into the title of a Poet, am prouoked to say fomthing vnto you in the defence of that my vnelected vocation, which if I handle with more good will then good reasons, beare with me, fith the scholler is to be pardoned that foloweth the steppes of his Maister. And yet I must say, that as I haue iust cause to make a pittiful defence of poore Poetry, which from almost the highest estimation of learning, is fallen to be the laughingstocke of children. So haue I need to bring some more auailable proofes: fith the former is by no man barred of his deserued credite, the silly latter hath had euen the names of Philosophers vsed to the defacing of it, with great danger of ciuill war among the Muses. And first, truly to al them that professing learning inueigh against Poetry, may iustly be objected, that they goe very neer to vngratfulnes, to seek to deface that, which in the noblest nations and languages that are knowne, hath been the first light-giuer to ignorance, and first Nurse, whose milk by little and little enabled them to feed afterwards of tougher knowledges: and will they now play the Hedgehog, that being receiued into the den, draue out his host? or rather the Vipers, that with theyr birth kill their Parents? Let learned Greece in any of her manifold Sciences, be able to shew me one booke, before *Museus*, *Homer*, and *Hesiodus*, all three nothing els but Poets. Nay, let any historie be brought, that can say any VVriters were there before them, if they were not men of the same skil, as *Orpheus*, *Linus*, and some other are named: who hauing beene the first of that Country, that made pens deliuerers of their knowledge to their posterity, may iustly challenge to bee called their Fathers in learning: for not only in time they had this priority (although in it self antiquity be venerable) but went before them, as

caufes to drawe with their charming sweetnes, the wild vntamed wits to an admiration of knowledge. So as *Amphion* was fayde to moue ftones with his Poetrie, to build Thebes. And *Orpheus* to be listened to by beastes, indeed, stony and beastly people. So among the Romans were *Liuius*, *Andronicus*, and *Ennius*. So in the Italian language, the first that made it aspire to be a Treasure-house of Science, were the Poets *Dante*, *Boccace*, and *Petrarch*. So in our English were *Gower* and *Chawcer*.

After whom, encouraged and delighted with their excellent fore-going, others haue followed, to beautifie our mother tongue, as wel in the same kinde as in other Arts. This did so notably shewe it selfe, that the Phylosophers of Greece, durst not a long time appeare to the worlde but vnder the masks of Poets. So *Thales*, *Empedocles*, and *Parmenides*, fange their naturall Phylosophie in verses: so did *Pythagoras* and *Phocilides* their morral counfells: so did *Tirteus* in war matters, and *Solon* in matters of policie: or rather, they beeing Poets, dyd exercise their delightful vaine in those points of highest knowledge, which before them lay hid to the world. For that wise *Solon* was directly a Poet, it is manifest, hauing written in verse, the notable fable of the Atlantick Iland, which was continued by *Plato*.

And truly, euen *Plato*, whosoeuer well considereth, shall find, that in the body of his work, though the inside and strength were Philosophy, the skinne as it were and beautie, depended most of Poetrie: for all standeth vpon Dialogues, wherein he faineth many honest Burgeffes of Athens to speake of such matters, that if they had been sette on the racke, they would neuer haue confessed them. Besides, his poetical describing the circumstances of their meetings, as the well ordering of a banquet, the delicacie of a walke, with enterlacing meere tales, as *Giges* Ring, and others, which who knoweth not to be flowers of Poetrie, did neuer walke into *Appolos* Garden.

And euen Historiographers, (although they lippes founde of things doone, and veritie be written in theyr fore-heads,) haue been glad to borrow both fashon, and perchance weight of Poets. So *Herodotus* entituled his Historie, by the name of the nine Muses: and both he and all the rest that followed him, either stole or vsurped of Poetrie, their passionate describing of pafsions, the many particularities of battailes, which no man could affirme: or if that be denied me, long Orations put in the mouthes of great Kings and Capitaines, which it is certaine they neuer pronounced. So that truely, neyther Phylosopher nor Historiographer, coulde at the first haue entred into the gates of populer iudgements, if they had not taken a great passport of Poetry, which in all Nations at this day wher learning florisheth not, is plaine to be seene: in all which they haue some feeling of Poetry. In Turkey, besides their lawe-giuing Diuines, they haue no other VVriters but Poets. In our neighbour Countrey Ireland, where truelie learning goeth very bare, yet are theyr Poets held in a deuoute reuerence. Euen among the most barbarous and simple Indians where no writing is, yet haue they their Poets, who make and sing songs which they call *Areytos*, both of theyr Auncestors deedes, and praises of theyr Gods. A sufficient probabilitie, that if euer learning come among them, it must be by hauing theyr hard dull wits softened and sharpened with the sweete delights of Poetrie. For vntill they find a pleasure in the exercises of the minde, great promises of much knowledge, will little perswade them, that knowe not the fruites of knowledge. In VVales, the true remnant of the auncient Brittons, as there are good authorities to shewe the long time they had Poets, which they called *Bardes*: so thorough all the conquests of Romaines, Saxons, Danes, and Normans, some of whom did seeke to ruine all memory of learning from among them, yet doo their Poets euen to this day, last; so as it is not more notable in soone beginning then in long continu-

ing. But since the Authors of most of our Sciences were the Romans, and before them the Greekes, let vs a little stand vpon their authorities, but euen so farre as to see, what names they haue giuen vnto this now scorned skill.

Among the Romans a Poet was called *Vates*, which is as much as a Diuiner, Fore-seer, or Prophet, as by his conioyned wordes *Vaticinium* and *Vaticinari*, is manifest: so heauenly a title did that excellent people bestow vpon this hart-rauishing knowledge. And so farre were they carried into the admiration thereof, that they thought in the chaunceable hitting vpon any such verses, great fore-tokens of their following fortunes were placed. VVhereupon grew the worde of *Sortes Virgilianæ*, when by suddaine opening *Virgils* booke, they lighted vpon any verse of hys making, whereof the histories of the Emperors liues are full: as of *Albinus* the Gouvernour of our Iland, who in his childe-hoode mette with this verse

Arma amens capio nec fat rationis in armis.

And in his age performed it, which although it were a very vaine, and godles superstition, as also it was to think that spirits were commaunded by such verses, whereupon this word charmes, deriued of *Carmina* commeth, so yet serueth it to shew the great reuerence those wits were helde in. And altogether not without ground, since both the Oracles of *Delphos* and *Sibillas* prophecies, where wholly deliuered in verses. For that same exquisite obseruing of number and measure in words, and that high flying liberty of conceit proper to the Poet, did seeme to haue some diuine force in it.

And may not I presume a little further, to shew the reasonablenes of this worde *Vates*? And say that the holy *Dauids* Psalmes are a diuine Poem? If I doo, I shall not do it without the testimonie of great learned men, both auncient and moderne: but euen the name Psalmes will speake for mee, which being interpreted,

is nothing but songes Then that it is fully written in meeter, as all learned Hebricians agree, although the rules be not yet fully found. Lastly and principally, his handling his prophecy, which is meerely poetical. For what els is the awaking his musicall instruments? The often and free changing of persons? His notable *Profopopeias*, when he maketh you as it were, see God comming in his Maiestie. His telling of the Beastes ioyfulness, and hills leaping, but a heauenlie poesie: wherein almost hee sheweth himselfe a passionate louer, of that vnspeakable and euerlasting beautie to be seene by the eyes of the minde, onely cleered by fayth. But truely nowe hauing named him, I feare mee I seeme to prophane that holy name, applying it to Poetrie, which is among vs throwne downe to so ridiculous an estimation: but they that with quiet iudgements will looke a little deeper into it, shall finde the end and working of it such, as beeing rightly applied, deserueth not to bee scourged out of the Church of God.

But now, let vs see how the Greekes named it, and howe they deemed of it. The Greekes called him a Poet, which name, hath as the most excellent, gone thorough other Languages. It commeth of this word *Poiein*, which is, to make: wherein I know not, whether by lucke or wisedome, wee Englishmen haue mette with the Greekes, in calling him a maker: which name, how high and incomparable a title it is, I had rather were knowne by marking the scope of other Sciences, then by my partiall allegation.

There is no Arte deliuered to mankinde, that hath not the workes of Nature for his principall object, without which they could not consist, and on which they so depend, as they become Actors and Players as it were, of what Nature will haue set foorth. So doth the Astronomer looke vpon the starres, and by that he seeth, setteth downe what order Nature hath taken therein. So doe the Geometrician, and Arithmetician, in their diuerse sorts of quantities. So doth the

Mufitian in times, tel you which by nature agree, which not. The naturall Philosopher thereon hath his name, and the Morrall Philosopher standeth vpon the naturall vertues, vices, and paffions of man; and followe Nature (faith hee) therein, and thou fhalt not erre. The Lawyer fayth what men haue determined. The Historian what men haue done. The Grammarian fpeaketh onely of the rules of fpeech, and the Rethorician, and Logitian, confidering what in Nature will fooneft proue and perfwade, thereon giue artificial rules, which ftill are compaffed within the circle of a question, according to the propofed matter. The Phifition waigheth the nature of a mans bodie, and the nature of things helpful, or hurtefull vnto it. And the Metaphifick, though it be in the feconde and abftra&ct notions, and therefore be counted supernaturall: yet doth hee indeede builde vpon the depth of Nature: onely the Poet, difdayning to be tied to any fuch fubie&ction, lifted vp with the vigor of his owne inuention, dooth growe in effect, another nature, in making things either better then Nature bringeth forth, or quite a newe formes fuch as neuer were in Nature, as the *Heroes*, *Demigods*, *Cyclops*, *Chimeras*, *Furies*, and fuch like: fo as hee goeth hand in hand with Nature, not inclofed within the narrow warrant of her guifts, but freely ranging onely within the Zodiack of his owne wit.

Nature neuer fet forth the earth in fo rich tapiftry, as diuers Poets haue done, neither with plesant riuers, fruitful trees, sweet smelling flowers: nor whatfoeuer els may make the too much loued earth more louely. Her world is brafen, the Poets only deliuer a golden: but let thofe things alone and goe to man, for whom as the other things are, fo it feemeth in him her vttermo&ft cunning is imployed, and knowe whether fhee haue brought foorth fo true a loue as *Theagines*, fo con&ftant a friende as *Pilades*, fo valiant a man as *Orlando*, fo right a Prince as *Xenophons Cyrus*: fo excellent a man euery way, as *Virgils Aeneas*: neither let this be iestingly conceiued, becaufe the works of

the one be effensiall : the other, in imitation or fiction, for any vnderstanding knoweth the skil of the Artificer: standeth in that *Idea* or fore-conceite of the work, and not in the work it selfe. And that the Poet hath that *Idea*, is manifest, by deliuering them forth in such excellencie as hee hath imagined them. VVhich deliuering forth also, is not wholie imaginatiue, as we are wont to say by them that build Castles in the ayre : but so farre substantially it worketh, not onely to make a *Cyrus*, which had been but a particuler excellencie, as Nature might haue done, but to bestow a *Cyrus* vpon the worlde, to make many *Cyrus's*, if they wil learne aright, why, and how that Maker made him.

Neyther let it be deemed too fawcie a comparifon to ballance the highest poynt of mans wit with the efficacie of Nature : but rather giue right honor to the heavenly Maker of that maker : who hauing made man to his owne likenes, set him beyond and ouer all the workes of that second nature, which in nothing hee sheweth so much as in Poetrie: when with the force of a diuine breath, he bringeth things forth far surpassing her dooings, with no small argument to the incredulous of that first accurfed fall of *Adam* : sith our erected wit, maketh vs know what perfection is, and yet our infected will, keepeth vs from reaching vnto it. But these arguments wil by fewe be vnderstood, and by fewer granted. Thus much (I hope) will be giuen me, that the Greekes with some probabilitie of reason, gaue him the name aboue all names of learning. Now let vs goe to a more ordinary opening of him, that the trueth may be more palpable : and so I hope, though we get not so vnmatched a praise as the Etimologie of his names wil grant, yet his very description, which no man will denie, shall not iustly be barred from a principall commendation.

Poesie therefore is an arte of imitation, for so *Aristotle* termeth it in his word *Mimesis*, that is to say, a representing, counterfetting, or figuring foorth : to

speake metaphorically, a speaking picture: with this end, to teach and delight; of this haue beene three feuerall kindes. The chiefe both in antiquitie and excellencie, were they that did imitate the inconceiuable excellencies of GOD. Such were, *Dauid* in his Psalmes, *Salomon* in his song of Songs, in his Ecclesiastes, and Prouerbs: *Moses* and *Debora* in theyr Hymnes, and the writer of *Iob*; which beside other, the learned *Emanuel Tremilius* and *Franciscus Iunius*, doe entitle the poetick part of the Scripture. Against these none will speake that hath the holie Ghost in due holy reuerence.

In this kinde, though in a full wrong diuinitie, were *Orpheus*, *Amphion*, *Homer* in his hymes, and many other, both Greekes and Romaines: and this Poesie must be vsed, by whosoever will follow *S. Iames* his counsell, in singing Psalmes when they are merry: and I knowe is vsed with the fruite of comfort by some, when in sorrowfull pangs of their death-bringing finnes, they find the consolation of the neuer-leauing goodnesse.

The second kinde, is of them that deale with matters Philosophicall; eyther morrall, as *Tirteus*, *Phocilides* and *Cato*, or naturall, as *Lucretius* and *Virgils Georgicks*: or Astronomicall, as *Manilius*, and *Pontanus*: or historical, as *Lucan*: which who mislike, the faulte is in their iudgements quite out of taste, and not in the sweet foode of sweetly vttered knowledge. But because thys second sorte is wrapped within the folde of the proposed subiect, and takes not the course of his owne inuention, whether they properly be Poets or no, let Gramarians dispute: and goe to the thyrd, indeed right Poets, of whom chiefly this question ariseth; betwixt whom, and these second is such a kinde of difference, as betwixt the meaner sort of Painters, (who counterfet onely such faces as are sette before them) and the more excellent: who hauing no law but wit, bestow that in cullours vpon you which is fittest for the eye to see:

as the constant, though lamenting looke of *Lucrecia*, when she punished in her selfe an others fault.

VVherein he painteth not *Lucrecia* whom he neuer sawe, but painteth the outwarde beauty of such a vertue: for these third be they which most properly do imitate to teach and delight, and to imitate, borrow nothing of what is, hath been, or shall be: but range onely rayned with learned discretion, into the diuine consideration of what may be, and should be. These bee they, that as the first and most noble sorte, may iustly bee termed *Vates*, so these are waited on in the excellen[te]st languages and best vnderstandings, with the fore described name of Poets: for these indeede doo meerey inake to imitate: and imitate both to delight and teach: and delight to moue men to take that goodnes in hande, which without delight they would flye as from a stranger. And teach, to make them know that goodnes whereunto they are mooued, which being the noblest scope to which euer any learning was directed, yet want there not idle tongues to barke at them. These be subdiuided into sundry more speciall denominations. The most notable bee the *Heroick*, *Lirick*, *Tragick*, *Comick*, *Satirick*, *Iambick*, *Elegiack*, *Pastorall*, and certaine others. Some of these being termed according to the matter they deale with, some by the sorts of verses they liked best to write in, for indeede the greatest part of Poets have apparelled their poetick inuentions in that numbrous kinde of writing which is called verse: indeed but apparelled, verse being but an ornament and no cause to Poetry: sith there haue beene many most excellent Poets, that neuer versified, and now swarme many versifiers that neede neuer aunswere to the name of Poets. For *Xenophon*, who did imitate so excellently, as to giue vs *effigiem iusti imperij*, the portraiture of a iust Empire vnder the name of *Cyrus*, (as *Cicero* sayth of him) made therein an absolute heroickall Poem.

So did *Heliodorus* in his sugred inuention of that picture of loue in *Theagines* and *Cariclea*, and yet

both these writ in Prose : which I speak to shew, that it is not riming and versing that maketh a Poet, no more then a long gowne maketh an Aduocate : who though he pleaded in armor should be an Aduocate and no Souldier. But it is that fayning notable images of vertues, vices, or what els, with that delightfull teaching which must be the right describing note to know a Poet by : although indeed the Senate of Poets hath chosen verse as their fittest rayment, meaning, as in matter they passed all in all, so in maner to goe beyond them : not speaking (table talke fashion or like men in a dreame,) words as they chanceably fall from the mouth, but peyzing each fillable of each worde by iust proportion according to the dignitie of the subiect.

Nowe therefore it shall not bee amisse first to waigh this latter sort of Poetrie by his works, and then by his partes; and if in neyther of these Anatomies hee be condemnable, I hope wee shall obtaine a more fauourable sentence. This purifying of wit, this enritching of memory, enabling of iudgment, and enlarging of conceyt, which commonly we call learning, vnder what name soeuer it com forth, or to what immediat end soeuer it be directed, the final end is, to lead and draw vs to as high a perfection, as our degenerate soules made worse by theyr clayey lodgings, can be capable of. This according to the inclination of the man, bred many formed impressions, for some that thought this felicity principally to be gotten by knowledge, and no knowledge to be so high and heavenly, as acquaintance with the starres, gaue themselues to Astronomie; others, perswading themselues to be *Demi-gods* if they knewe the causes of things, became naturall and supernaturall Philosophers, some an admirable delight drew to Musicke : and some, the certainty of demonstration, to the Mathematickes. But all, one, and other, hauing this scope to knowe, and by knowledge to lift vp the mind from the dungeon of the body, to the enioying his owne diuine essence. But

when by the ballance of experience it was found, that the Astronomer looking to the starres might fall into a ditch; that the enquiring Philosopher might be blinde in himselfe, and the Mathematician might draw forth a straight line with a crooked hart: then loe, did prooue the ouer ruler of opinions, make manifest, that all these are but seruing Sciences, which as they haue each a priuate end in themselues, so yet are they all directed to the highest end of the mistres Knowledge, by the Greekes called *Arkitecktonike*, which stands, (as I thinke) in the knowledge of a mans selfe, in the Ethicke and politick consideration, with the end of well dooing and not of well knowing onely; euen as the Sadlers next end is to make a good saddle: but his farther end, to serue a nobler facultie, which is horsemanship, so the horsemans to souldiery, and the Souldier not onely to haue the skill, but to performe the practise of a Souldier: so that the ending end of all earthly learning, being vertuous action, those skilles that most serue to bring forth that, haue a most iust title to bee Princes ouer all the rest: wherein if wee can shewe the Poets noblenes, by setting him before his other Competitors, among whom as principall challengers step forth the morrall Philosophers, whom me thinketh, I see comming towards me with a fullen grauity, as though they could not abide vice by day light, rudely clothed for to witnes outwardly their contempt of outward things, with bookes in their hands agaynst glory, whereto they sette theyr names, sophistically speaking against subtilty, and angry with any man in whom they see the foule fault of anger: these men casting larges as they goe, of Definitions, Diuisions, and Distinctions, with a scornefull interogatiue, doe soberly aske, whether it bee possible to finde any path, so ready to leade a man to vertue, as that which teacheth what vertue is? and teacheth it not onely by deliuering forth his very being, his causes, and effects: but also, by making known his enemie vice, which must be de-

stroyed, and his comberfome feruant Pafsion, which muft be maiftered, by fhewing the generalities that contayneth it, and the ſpecialities that are deriued from it. Laſtly, by playne ſetting downe, how it extendeth it ſelfe out of the limits of a mans own little world, to the gouernment of families, and maintayning of publique ſocieties.

The Historian, ſcarcely giueth leysure to the Moralift, to ſay ſo much, but that he loden with old Mouſe-eaten records, authoriſing himſelfe (for the moſt part) vpon other histories, whoſe greateſt authorities, are built vpon the notable foundation of Heare-ſay, hauing much a-doe to accord differing VVriters, and to pick trueth out of partiality, better acquainted with a thouſande yeeres a goe, then with the preſent age: and yet better knowing how this world goeth, then how his owne wit runneth: curious for antiquities, and inquiſitiue of nouelties, a wonder to young folkes, and a tyrant in table talke, denieth in a great chafe, that any man for teaching of vertue, and vertuous actions, is comparable to him. I am *Lux vitæ, Temporum Magiſtra, Vita memoriæ, Nuncia vetuſtatis. &c.*

The Phyloſopher (ſayth hee) teacheth a diſputatiue vertue, but I doe an actiue: his vertue is excellent in the dangerleſſe Academie of *Plato*, but mine ſheweth forth her honorable face, in the battailes of *Marathon, Pharfalia, Poitiers, and Agincourt*. Hee teacheth vertue by certaine abſtract conſiderations, but I onely bid you follow the footing of them that haue gone before you. Olde-aged experience, goeth beyond the fine-witted Phyloſopher, but I giue the experience of many ages. Laſtly, if he make the Song-booke, I put the learners hande to the Lute: and if hee be the guide, I am the light.

Then woulde hee alledge you innumerable examples, conferring ſtorie by ſtorie, how much the wiſeſt Senatours and Princes, haue beene directed by the credite of hiſtory, as *Brutus, Alphonſus of Aragon*, and who not, if need bee? At length, the long lyne

of theyr disputation maketh a poynt in thys, that the one giueth the precept, and the other the example.

Nowe, whom shall wee finde (sith the question standeth for the highest forme in the Schoole of learning) to bee Moderator? Trulie, as me seemeth, the Poet; and if not a Moderator, euen the man that ought to carrie the title from them both, and much more from all other seruing Sciences. Therefore compare we the Poet with the Historian, and with the Morrall Phylosopher, and, if hee goe beyond them both, no other humane skill can match him. For as for the Diuine, with all reuerence it is euer to be excepted, not only for hauing his scope as far beyonde any of these, as eternitie exceedeth a moment, but euen for passing each of these in themselves.

And for the Lawyer, though *Ius* bee the Daughter of Iustice, and Iustice the chiefe of Vertues, yet because hee seeketh to make men good, rather *Formidine pænæ*, then *Virtutis amore*, or to say righter, dooth not indeuour to make men good, but that their euill hurt not others: hauing no care so hee be a good Cittizen; how bad a man he be. Therefore, as our wickednesse maketh him necesarie, and necesitie maketh him honorable, so is hee not in the deepest trueth to stande in rancke with these; who all indeuour to take naughtines away, and plant goodnesse euen in the secretest cabinet of our soules. And these foure are all, that any way deale in that consideration of mens manners, which beeing the supreme knowledge, they that best breed it, deserue the best commendation.

The Philosopher therfore and the Historian, are they which would win the goale: the one by precept, the other by example. But both not hauing both, doe both halte. For the Philosopher, setting downe with thorny argument the bare rule, is so hard of vtterance, and so mistie to bee conceiued, that one that hath no other guide but him, shall wade in him till hee be olde, before he shall finde iussicient cause to bee honest: for his knowledge standeth so vpon the abstract and generall, that happie is that man who

may vnderstande him, and more happie, that can applye what hee dooth vnderstand.

On the other side, the Historian wanting the precept, is so tyed, not to what shoulde bee, but to what is, to the particuler truth of things, and not to the general reason of things, that hys example draweth no necessary consequence, and therefore a lesse fruitfull doctrine.

Nowe dooth the peerelesse Poet performe both: for whatsoeuer the Philosopher sayth shoulde be doone, hee giueth a perfect picture of it in some one, by whom hee presuppofeth it was done. So as hee coupleth the generall notion with the particuler example. A perfect picture I say, for hee yeeldeth to the powers of the minde, an image of that whereof the Philosopher bestoweth but a woordish description: vvhich dooth neyther strike, pierce, nor possesse the sight of the soule, so much as that other dooth.

For as in outward things, to a man that had neuer seene an Elephant or a Rinoceros, who should tell him most exquisitely all theyr shapes, cullour, bignesse, and perticular markes: or of a gorgeous Pallace, the Architecture, with declaring the full beauties, might well make the hearer able to repeate as it were by rote, all hee had heard, yet should neuer satisfie his inward conceits, with being witnes to it selfe of a true liuely knowledge: but the same man, as soone as hee might see those beasts well painted, or the house wel in moddel, should straightwaies grow without need of any description, to a iudicial comprehending of them, so no doubt the Philosopher with his learned definition, bee it of vertue, vices, matters of publick policie, or priuat gouernment, replenisheth the memory with many infallible grounds of wisdom: which notwithstanding, lye darke before the imaginatiue and iudging powre, if they bee not illuminated or figured foorth by the speaking picture of Poesie.

Tullie taketh much paynes and many times not without poetickall helpes, to make vs knowe the force loue of our Countrey hath in vs. Let vs but heare

old *Anchises* speaking in the middest of Troyes flames, or see *Vlisses* in the fulnes of all *Calipso's* delights, bewayle his absence from barraine and beggerly *Ithaca*. Anger the *Stoicks* say, was a short maddnes, let but *Sophocles* bring you *Ajax* on a stage, killing and whipping Sheepe and Oxen, thinking them the Army of Greeks, with theyr Chiefetaines *Agamemnon* and *Menelaus*, and tell mee if you haue not a more familiar insight into anger, then finding in the Schoolemen his *Genus* and difference. See whether wisdome and temperance in *Vlisses* and *Diomedes*, valure in *Achilles*, friendship in *Nifus*, and *Eurialus*, euen to an ignoraunt man, carry not an apparent shyning: and contrarily, the remorse of conscience in *Oedipus*, the soone repenting pride of *Agamemnon*, the selfe-deuouring crueltie in his Father *Atreus*, the violence of ambition in the two *Theban* brothers, the sowre-sweetnes of reuenge in *Medæa*, and to fall lower, the *Terentian Gnato*, and our *Chaucers* Pandar, so exprest, that we nowe vse their names to signifie their trades. And finally, all vertues, vices, and passions, so in their own naturall seates layd to the viewe, that wee seeme not to heare of them, but cleerely to see through them. But euen in the most excellent determination of goodnes, what Philosophers counsell can so redily direct a Prince, as the fayned *Cyrus* in *Xenophon*? or a vertuous man in all fortunes, as *Aeneas* in *Virgill*? or a whole Common-wealth, as the way of Sir *Thomas Moores Eutopia*? I say the way, because where Sir *Thomas Moore* erred, it was the fault of the man and not of the Poet, for that way of patterning a Common-wealth was most absolute, though hee perchaunce hath not so absolutely perfourmed it: for the question is, whether the fayned image of Poesie, or the regular instruction of Philosophy, hath the more force in teaching: wherein if the Philosophers haue more rightly shewed themselues Philosophers, then the Poets haue obtained to the high top of their profession, as in truth,

—————*Mediocribus esse poetis,*

Non Dij, non homines, non concessere Columnæ:

It is I say againe, not the fault of the Art, but that by fewe men that Arte can bee accomplished.

Certainly, euen our Sauour Christ could as well haue giuen, the morrall common places of vncharitablenes and humblenes, as the diuine narration of *Diues* and *Lazarus*: or of disobedience and mercy, as that heauenly discourse of the lost Child and the gracious Father; but that hys through-searching wisdom, knewe the estate of *Diues* burning in hell, and of *Lazarus* being in *Abrahams* bosome, would more constantly (as it were) inhabit both the memory and iudgment. Truly, for my selfe, mee seemes I see before my eyes the lost Childes disdainefull prodigality, turned to enuie a Swines dinner: which by the learned Diuines, are thought not historicall acts, but instructing Parables. For conclusion, I say the Philosopher teacheth, but he teacheth obscurely, so as the learned onely can vnderstande him: that is to say, he teacheth them that are already taught, but the Poet is the foode for the tenderest stomacks, the Poet is indeed the right Popular Philosopher, whereof *Esops* tales giue good prooffe: whose pretty Allegories, stealing vnder the formall tales of Beastes, make many, more beastly then Beasts, begin to heare the sound of vertue from these dumbe speakers.

But now may it be alledged, that if this imagining of matters be so fitte for the imagination, then must the Historian needs surpasse, who bringeth you images of true matters, such as indeede were doone, and not such as fantastically or falsely may be suggested to haue been doone. Truly *Aristotle* himselfe in his discourse of Poesie, plainly determineth this question, saying, that Poetry is *Philosophoteron* and *Spoudaioteron*, that is to say, it is more Philosophicall, and more studiously serious, then history. His reason is, because Poesie dealeth with *Katholou*, that is to say, with the vniuersall consideration; and the history with *Kathe-*

kaſton, the perticuler ; nowe ſayth he, the vniuerſall wayes what is fit to bee ſayd or done, eyther in likeli-hood or neceſſity, (which the Poefie conſidereth in his impoſed names,) and the perticuler, onely mark's, whether *Alcibiades* did, or ſuffered, this or that. Thus farre *Ariſtotle*: which reaſon of his, (as all his) is moſt full of reaſon. For indeed, if the queſtion were whether it were better to haue a perticular acte truly or falſly ſet down : there is no doubt which is to be choſen, no more then whether you had rather haue *Vefpaſians* picture right as hee was, or at the Painters pleaſure nothing reſembling. But if the queſtion be for your owne uſe and learning, whether it be better to haue it ſet downe as it ſhould be, or as it was : then certainly is more doctrinable the fained *Cirus* of *Xenophon* then the true *Cyrus* in *Iuſtine*: and the ſayned *Aeneas* in *Virgil*, then the right *Aeneas* in *Dares Phrygius*.

As to a Lady that deſired to faſhion her countenance to the beſt grace, a Painter ſhould more benefite her to portraite a moſt ſweet face, wryting *Canidia* vpon it, then to paynt *Canidia* as ſhe was, who *Horace* ſweareth, was foule and ill fauoured.

If the Poet doe his part a-right, he will ſhew you in *Tantalus*, *Atrous*, and ſuch like, nothing that is not to be ſhunned. In *Cyrus*, *Aeneas*, *Vliſſes*, each thing to be followed ; where the Hiſtorian, bound to tell things as things were, cannot be liberall (without hee will be poetically) of a perfect patterne : but as in *Alexander* or *Scipio* himſelfe, ſhew dooings, ſome to be liked, ſome to be miſliked. And then how will you diſcerne what to followe but by your owne diſcretion, which you had without reading *Quintus Curtius*? And whereas a man may ſay, though in vniuerſall conſideration of doctrine the Poet preuaileth ; yet that the hſtorie, in his ſaying ſuch a thing was doone, doth warrant a man more in that hee ſhall follow.

The aunſwere is manifeſt, that if hee ſtande vpon that was ; as if hee ſhould argue, becauſe it rayned yeſterday, therefore it ſhoulde rayne to day, then

indeede it hath some aduantage to a grose conceite : but if he know an example onlie, informes a coniectured likelihood, and so goe by reason, the Poet dooth so farre exceede him, as hee is to frame his example to that which is most reasonable : be it in warlike, politick, or priuate matters ; where the Historian in his bare *VVas*, hath many times that which wee call fortune, to ouer-rule the best wisedome. Manie times, he must tell euent, whereof he can yeelde no cause : or if hee doe, it must be poetically ; for that a fayned example, hath asmuch force to teach, as a true example : (for as for to mooue, it is cleere, sith the fayned may bee tuned to the highest key of passion) let vs take one example, wherein a Poet and a Historian doe concur.

Herodotus and *Iustine* do both testifie, that *Zopirus*, King *Darius* faithfull seruant, seeing his Maister long resisted by the rebellious *Babylonians*, fayned himselfe in extreame disgrace of his King : for verifying of which, he caused his own nose and eares to be cut off : and so flying to the *Babylonians*, was receiued : and for his knowne valour, so far credited, that hee did finde meanes to deliuer them ouer to *Darius*. Much like matter doth *Liuius* record of *Tarquinius* and his sonne. *Xenophon* excellently faineth such another stratageme, performed by *Abradates* in *Cyrus* behalfe. Now would I fayne know, if occasion bee presented vnto you, to serue your Prince by such an honest dissimulation, why you doe not as well learne it of *Xenophons* fiction, as of the others verity : and truly so much the better, as you shall saue your nose by the bargain : for *Abradates* did not counterfet so far. So then the best of the Historian, is subiect to the Poet ; for whatsoever action, or faction, whatsoever counsell, pollicy, or warre stratagem, the Historian is bound to recite, that may the Poet (if he list) with his imitation make his own ; beautifying it both for further teaching, and more delighting, as it pleaseth him : hauing all, from *Dante* his heauen, to hys hell, vnder the authoritie

of his penne. VVhich if I be asked what Poets haue done so, as I might well name some, yet say I, and say againe, I speak of the Arte, and not of the Artificer.

Nowe, to that which commonly is attributed to the prayse of histories, in respect of the notable learning is gotten by marking the successe, as though therein a man should see vertue exalt-d, and vice punished. Truly that commendation is peculiar to Poetrie, and farre of from History. For indeede Poetrie euer setteth vertue so out in her best cullours, making Fortune her wel-wayting hand-mayd, that one must needs be enamored of her. VVell may you see *Vlisses* in a storme, and in other hard plights; but they are but exercises of patience and magnanimitie, to make them shine the more in the neere-following prosperitie. And of the contrarie part, if euill men come to the stage, they euer goe out (as the Tragedie VVriter answered, to one that misliked the shew of such persons) so manacled, as they little animate folkes to followe them. But the Historian, beeing captiued to the trueth of a foolish world, is many times a terror from well dooing, and an incouragement to vnbrideled wickednes.

For, see wee not valiant *Milciades* rot in his fetters? The iust *Phocion*, and the accomplished *Socrates*, put to death like Traytors? The cruell *Seuerus* liue prosperously? The excellent *Seuerus* miserably murdered? *Sylla* and *Marius* dying in theyr beddes? *Pompey* and *Cicero* slaine then, when they would haue thought exile a happinesse?

See wee not vertuous *Cato* driuen to kyll himselfe? and rebell *Cæsar* so aduaunced, that his name yet after 1600. yeares, lasteth in the highest honor? And marke but euen *Cæsars* own words of the fore-named *Sylla*, (who in that onely did honestly, to put downe his dishonest tyrannie,) *Literas nesciuit*, as if want of learning caused him to doe well. Hee meant it not by Poetrie, which not content with earthly plagues, deuifeth new punishments in hel for Tyrants: nor yet

by Philosophie, which teacheth *Occidendos esse*, but no doubt by skill in Historie: for that indeede can afford your *Cipselus*, *Periander*, *Phalaris*, *Dionisius*, and I know not how many more of the same kennell, that speede well enough in theyr abominable vniustice or vsurpation. I conclude therefore, that hee excelleth Historie, not onely in furnishing the minde with knowledge, but in setting it forward, to that which deserueth to be called and accounted good: which setting forward, and moouing to well dooing, indeed setteth the Lawrell crowne vpon the Poet as victorious, not onely of the Historian, but ouer the Phylosopher: howsoeuer in teaching it may bee questionable.

For suppose it be granted, (that which I suppose with great reason may be denied,) that the Philosopher in respect of his methodical proceeding, doth teach more perfectly then the Poet: yet do I thinke, that no man is so much *Philophilosophos*, as to compare the Philosopher in moouing, with the Poet.

And that moouing is of a higher degree then teaching, it may by this appeare: that it is wel nigh the cause and the effect of teaching. For who will be taught, if hee bee not mooued with desire to be taught? and what so much good doth that teaching bring forth, (I speak still of morrall doctrine) as that it mooueth one to doe that which it dooth teach? for as *Aristotle* sayth, it is not *Gnostis*, but *Praxis* must be the fruit. And howe *Praxis* cannot be, without being mooued to practise, it is no hard matter to consider.

The Philosopher sheweth you the way, hee informeth you of the particularities, as well of the tediousnes of the way, as of the pleasant lodging you shall haue when your iourney is ended, as of the many by-turnings that may diuert you from your way. But this is to no man but to him that will read him, and read him with attentiuie studious painfulnes. VVhich constant desire, whosoeuer hath in him, hath already past halfe the hardnes of the way, and therefore is beholding to the Philosopher but for the other halfe.

Nay truly, learned men haue learnedly thought, that where once reason hath so much ouer-mastred passion, as that the minde hath a free desire to doe well, the inward light each minde hath in it selfe, is as good as a Philosophers booke ; seeing in nature we know it is wel, to doe well, and what is well, and what is euill, although not in the words of Arte, which Philosophers bestowe vpon vs. For out of naturall conceit, the Philosophers drew it, but to be moued to doe that which we know, or to be mooued with desire to knowe, *Hoc opus : Hic labor est.*

Nowe therein of all Sciences, (I speak still of humane, and according to the humane conceits) is our Poet the Monarch. For he dooth not only show the way, but giueth so sweete a prospect into the way, as will intice any man to enter into it. Nay, he dooth as if your iourney should lye through a fayre Vineyard, at the first giue you a cluster of Grapes : that full of that taste, you may long to passe further. He beginneth not with obscure definitions, which must blur the margent with interpretations, and load the memory with doubtfulnesse : but hee commeth to you with words sent in delightfull proportion, either accompanied with, or prepared for the well inchaunting skill of Musicke ; and with a tale forsooth he commeth vnto you : with a tale which holdeth children from play, and old men from the chimney corner. And pretending no more, doth intende the winning of the mind from wickednesse to vertue : euen as the childe is often brought to take most wholsom things, by hiding them in such other as haue a pleasant tast : which if one should beginne to tell them, the nature of *Aloes*, or *Rubarb* they shoulde receiue, woulde sooner take their Phisicke at their eares, then at their mouth. So is it in men (most of which are childish in the best things, till they bee cradled in their graues,) glad they will be to heare the tales of *Hercules*, *Achilles*, *Cyrus*, and *Aeneas* ; and hearing them, must needs heare the right description of wisdom, valure, and iustice ; which, if they had

been barely, that is to say, Philosophically set out, they would sweare they bee brought to schoole againe.

That imitation wherof Poetry is, hath the most conueniency to Nature of all other, in somuch, that as *Aristotle* sayth, those things which in themselves are horrible, as cruell battailes, vnnaturall Monsters, are made in poetick imitation delightfull. Truly I haue knowen men, that euen with reading *Amadis de Gaule*, (which God knoweth wanteth much of a perfect Poesie) haue found their harts moued to the exercise of courtesie, liberalitie, and especially courage.

VVho readeth *Aeneas* carrying olde *Anchises* on his back, that wisheth not it were his fortune to perforce so excellent an acte? VVhom doe not the words of *Turnus* moue? (the tale of *Turnus*, hauing planted his image in the imagination,)

—————*Fugientem hæc terra videbit,*
Vsque adeone mori miserum est?—————

VVhere the Philosophers, as they scorne to delight, so must they bee content little to moue: sauing wrangling, whether Vertue bee the chiefe, or the onely good: vvwhether the contemplatiue, or the actiue life doe excell: which *Plato* and *Boethius* well knew, and therefore made Mistres Philosophy, very often borrow the masking rayment of Poesie. For euen those harde harted euill men, who thinke vertue a schoole name, and knowe no other good, but *indulgere genio*, and therefore despise the austere admonitions of the Philosopher, and feele not the inward reason they stand vpon; yet will be content to be delighted: which is al, the good fellow Poet seemeth to promise: and so steale to see the forme of goodnes (which seene they cannot but loue) ere themselves be aware, as if they tooke a medicine of Cherries. Infinite proofes of the strange effects of this poetick inuention might be alledged, onely two shall serue, which are so often remembred, as I thinke all men knowe them.

The one of *Menenius Agrippa*, who when the whole

people of Rome had resolutely deuided themselues from the Senate, with apparant shew of vtter ruine: though hee were (for that time) an excellent Oratour, came not among them, vpon trust of figuratiue speeches, or cunning insinuations: and much lesse, with farre set *Maximes* of Phylosophie, which (especially if they were *Platonick*,) they must haue learned Geometrie before they could well haue conceiued: but forsooth he behaues himselfe, like a homely, and familiar Poet. Hee telleth them a tale, that there was a time, when all the parts of the body made a mutinous conspiracie against the belly, which they thought deuoured the fruits of each others labour: they concluded they would let so vnprofitable a spender starue. In the end, to be short, (for the tale is notorious, and as notorious that it was a tale,) with punishing the belly, they plagued themselues. This applied by him, wrought such effect in the people, as I neuer read, that euer words brought forth but then, so suddaine and so good an alteration; for vpon reasonable conditions, a perfect reconcilment ensued. The other is of *Nathan* the Prophet, who when the holie *David* had so far forsaken God, as to confirme adulterie with murther: when hee was to doe the tenderest office of a friende, in laying his owne shame before his eyes, sent by God to call againe so chosen a seruant: how doth he it? but by telling of a man, whose beloued Lambe was vngratefullie taken from his bosome: the applycation most diuinely true, but the discourse it selfe, fayned: which made *David*, (I speake of the second and instrumentall cause) as in a glasse, to see his own filthines, as that heauenly Psalm of mercie wel testifieth.

By these therefore examples and reasons, I think it may be manifest, that the Poet with that same hand of delight, doth draw the mind more effectually, then any other Arte dooth, and so a conclusion not vnfitlie ensueth: that as vertue is the most excellent resting place for all worldlie learning to make his end of: so

Poetrie, beeing the most familiar to teach it, and most princelie to moue towards it, in the most excellent work, is the most excellent workman. But I am content, not onely to decipher him by his workes, (although works in commendation or dispraise, must euer holde an high authority,) but more narrowly will examine his parts: so that (as in a man) though altogether may carry a presence ful of maiestie and beautie, perchance in some one defectious peece, we may find a blemish: now in his parts, kindes, or *Species*, (as you list to terme them) it is to be noted, that some Poesies haue coupled together two or three kindes, as Tragicall and Comicall, wher-vpon is risen, the Tragi-comicall. Some in the like manner haue mingled Prose and Verse, as *Sanazzar* and *Boetius*. Some haue mingled matters Heroicall and Pastorall. But that commeth all to one in this question, for if feuered they be good, the coniunction cannot be hurtfull. Therefore perchance forgetting some, and leauing some as needlesse to be remembred, it shall not be amisse in a worde to cite the speciall kindes, to see what faults may be found in the right vse of them.

Is it then the Pastorall Poem which is misliked? (for perchance, where the hedge is lowest, they will soonest leape ouer.) Is the poore pype disdained, which sometime out of *Melibeus* mouth, can shewe the miserie of people, vnder hard Lords, or rauening Souldiours? And again, by *Titirus*, what blessednes is deriued to them that lye lowest from the goodnesse of them that sit highest? Sometimes, vnder the prettie tales of VVolues and Sheepe, can include the whole considerations of wrong dooing and patience. Sometimes shew, that contention for trifles, can get but a trifling victorie. VVhere perchance a man may see, that euen *Alexander* and *Darius*, when they straue who should be Cocke of thys worlds dunghill, the benefit they got, was, that the after-liuers may say,

*Hæc memini et victum frustra contendere Thirsin:
Ex illo Coridon, Coridon est tempore nobis.*

Or is it the lamenting Elegiack, which in a kinde hart would mooue rather pittie then blame, who bewailes with the great Philosopher *Heraclitus*, the weakenes of man-kind, and the wretchednes of the world: who surely is to be prayfed, either for compafsionate accompanying iuft caufes of lamentation, or for rightly paynting out how weake be the paffions of wofulneffe. Is it the bitter, but wholfome Iambick, which rubs the galled minde, in making fhame the trumpet of villanie, with bolde and open crying out againft naughtines; Or the Satirick, who

Omne vafer vitium, ridenti tangit amico?

VVho sportingly neuer leaueth, vntil hee make a man laugh at folly, and at length afhamed, to laugh at himfelfe: which he cannot auoyd, without auoyding the follie. VVho while

Circum præcordia ludit.

giueth vs to feele, how many head-aches a paffionate life bringeth vs to. How when all is done,

Eft vlubris animus fi nos non deficit æquus?

No perchance it is the Comick, whom naughtie Play-makers and Stage-keepers, have iuftly made odious. To the argument of abuse, I will answer after. Onely thus much now is to be faid, that the Comedy is an imitation of the common errors of our life, which he representeth, in the moft ridiculous and fcornefull fort that may be. So as it is impoffible, that any beholder can be content to be fuch a one.

Now, as in Geometry, the oblique muft bee knowne as well as the right: and in Arithmetick, the odde aswell as the euen, fo in the actions of our life, who feeth not the filthines of euil, wanteth a great foile to perceiue the beauty of vertue. This doth the Comedy handle fo in our priuate and domeftical matters, as with hearing it, we get as it were an experience, what is to be looked for of a nigardly *Demea*: of a crafty *Danus*: of a flattering *Gnato*: of a vaine glorious

Thraso : and not onely to know what effects are to be expected, but to know who be such, by the signifying badge giuen them by the Comedian. And little reason hath any man to say, that men learne euill by seeing it so set out : sith as I sayd before, there is no man liuing, but by the force trueth hath in nature, no sooner seeth these men play their parts, but wisheth them in *Pistrinum* : although perchance the sack of his owne faults, lye so behinde hys back, that he seeth not himselfe daunce the same measure : whereto, yet nothing can more open his eyes, then to finde his own actions contemptibly set forth. So that the right vse of Comedy will (I thinke) by no body be blamed, and much lesse of the high and excellent Tragedy, that openeth the greatest wounds, and sheweth forth the Vicers, that are couered with Tissue : that maketh Kinges feare to be Tyrants, and Tyrants manifest their tyrannicall humors : that with stirring the affects of admiration and commiseration, teacheth, the vncertainty of this world, and vpon how weake foundations guilden roofes are builded. That maketh vs knowe,

*Qui sceptræ fœuus, duro imperio regit,
Timet timentes, metus in authorem redit.*

But how much it can mooue, *Plutarch* yeeldeth a notable testimonie, of the abhominable Tyrant, *Alexander Pheræus* ; from whose eyes, a Tragedy wel made, and represented, drewe aboundance of teares : who without all pittie, had murthered infinite numbers, and some of his owne blood. So as he, that was not ashamed to make matters for Tragedies, yet could not resist the sweet violence of a Tragedie.

And if it wrought no further good in him, it was, that he in despite of himselfe, withdrewe himselfe from harkening to that, which might mollifie his hardened heart. But it is not the Tragedy they doe mislike : For it were too absurd to cast out so excellent a representation of whatsoeuer is most worthy to be learned. Is it the Liricke that most displeaseth,

who with his tuned Lyre, and wel accorded voyce, giueth praise, the reward of vertue, to vertuous acts? who giues morrall precepts, and naturall Problemes, who sometimes rayfeth vp his voice to the height of the heauens, in singing the laudes of the immortall God. Certainly I must confesse my own barbarousnes, I neuer heard the olde song of *Percy* and *Duglas*, that I found not my heart mouued more then with a Trumpet: and yet is it sung but by some blinde Crouder, with no rougher voyce, then rude stile: which being so euill apparrelled in the dust and cobwebbes of that vnciuill age, what would it worke trymmed in the gorgeous eloquence of *Pindar*? In *Hungary* I haue seene it the manner at all Feasts, and other such meetings, to haue songes of their Auncestours valour; which that right Souldier-like Nation thinck the chiefeft kindlers of braue courage. The incomparable *Lacedemonians*, did not only carry that kinde of Musicke euer with them to the field, but euen at home, as such songes were made, so were they all content to bee the fingers of them, when the lusty men were to tell what they dyd, the olde men, what they had done, and the young men what they wold doe. And where a man may say, that *Pindar* many times prayfeth highly victories of small moment, matters rather of sport then vertue: as it may be aunswered, it was the fault of the Poet, and not of the Poetry; so indeede, the chiefe fault was in the tyme and custome of the Greekes, who set those toyes at so high a price, that *Phillip* of *Macedon* reckoned a horse-race wonne at *Olimpus*, among hys three fearefull felicities. But as the vnimitable *Pindar* often did, so is that kinde most capable and most fit, to awake the thoughts from the sleep of idlenes, to imbrace honorable enterprises.

There rests the Heroicall, whose very name (I thinke) should daunt all back-biters; for by what conceit can a tongue be directed to speake euill of that, which draweth with it, no lesse Champions

then *Achilles*, *Cyrus*, *Aeneas*, *Turnus*, *Tideus*, and *Rinaldo*? who doth not onely teach and moue to a truth, but teacheth and mooueth to the most high and excellent truth. VVho maketh magnanimity and iustice shine, throughout all misty fearefulnes and foggy desires. VVho, if the saying of *Plato* and *Tullie* bee true, that who could see Vertue, would be wonderfully rauished with the loue of her beauty: this man sets her out to make her more louely in her holyday apparell, to the eye of any that will daine, not to disdain, vntill they vnderstand. But if any thing be already sayd in the defence of sweete Poetry, all concurreth to the maintaining the Heroicall, which is not onely a kinde, but the best, and most accomplished kinde of Poetry. For as the image of each action styrreth and instructeth the mind, so the loftie image of such VVorthies, most inflameth the mind with desire to be worthy, and informes with counsel how to be worthy. Only let *Aeneas* be worne in the tablet of your memory, how he gouerneth himselfe in the ruine of his Country, in the preferuing his old Father, and carrying away his religious ceremonies: in obeying the Gods commandement to leaue *Dido*, though not onely all passionat kindenes, but euen the humane consideration of vertuous gratefulnes, would haue craued other of him. How in storms, howe in sports, howe in warre, howe in peace, how a fugitiue, how victorious, how besiedged, how besiedging, howe to strangers, howe to allyes, how to enemies, howe to his owne: lastly, how in his inward selfe, and how in his outward gouernment. And I thinke, in a minde not preiudiced with a preiudicating humor, hee will be found in excellencie fruitefull: yea, euen as *Horace* sayth

Melius Chrisippo et Crantore.

But truely I imagine, it falleth out with these Poet-whyppers, as with some good women, who often are sicke, but in sayth they cannot tel where. So the name of Poetrie is odious to them, but neither his cause, nor effects, neither the sum that containes him,

nor the particularities descending from him, giue any fast handle to their carping dispraye.

Sith then Poetrie is of all humane learning the most auncient, and of most fatherly antiquitie, as from whence other learnings haue taken theyr beginnings: sith it is so vniuersall, that no learned Nation dooth despise it, nor no barbarous Nation is without it: sith both Roman and Greek gaue diuine names vnto it: the one of prophesying, the other of making. And that indeede, that name of making is fit for him; considering, that where as other Arts retaine themselues within their subiect, and receiue as it were, their beeing from it: the Poet onely, bringeth his owne stuffe, and dooth not learne a conceite out of a matter, but maketh matter for a conceite: Sith neither his description, nor his ende, containeth any euill, the thing described cannot be euill: Sith his effects be so good as to teach goodnes and to delight the learners: Sith therein, (namely in morrall doctrine, the chiefe of all knowledges,) hee dooth not onely farre passe the Historian, but for instructing, is well nigh comparable to the Philosopher: and for mouing, leaues him behind him: Sith the holy scripture (wherein there is no vncleannes) hath whole parts in it poeticall. And that euen our Sauour Christ, vouchsafed to vse the flowers of it: Sith all his kindes are not onlie in their vnited formes, but in their seuered dissections fully commendable, I think, (and think I thinke rightly) the Lawrell crowne appointed for tryumphing Capitaines, doth worthilie (of al other learnings) honor the Poets tryumph. But because wee haue eares aswell as tongues, and that the lightest reasons that may be, will seeme to weigh greatly, if nothing be put in the counter-balance: let vs heare, and aswell as wee can ponder, what obiections may bee made against this Arte, which may be worthy, eyther of yeelding, or answering.

First truely I note, not onely in these *Myfomousoi* Poet-haters. but in all that kinde of people, who seek

a prayse by dispraying others, that they doe prodigally spend a great many wandering wordes, in quips, and scoffes; carping and taunting at each thing, which by styrring the Spleene, may stay the braine from a through beholding the worthines of the subiect.

Those kinde of obiections, as they are full of very idle easines, sith there is nothing of so sacred a maiestie, but that an itching tongue may rubbe it selfe vpon it: so deserue they no other answer, but in steed of laughing at the iest, to laugh at the iester. VVee know a playing wit, can prayse the discretion of an Asse; the comfortablenes of being in debt, and the iolly commoditie of beeing sick of the plague. So of the contrary side, if we will turne *Ouids* verse,

Vt lateat virtus, proximitate mali,

that good lye hid in neerenesse of the euill: *Agrippa* will be as merry in shewing the vanitie of Science, as *Erasmus* was in commending of follie. Neyther shall any man or matter escape some touch of these smyling raylers. But for *Erasmus* and *Agrippa*, they had another foundation then the superficial part would promise. Mary, these other pleasant Fault-finders, who wil correct the Verbe, before they vnderstande the Noun, and confute others knowledge before they confirme theyr owne: I would haue them onely remember, that scoffing commeth not of wisdom. So as the best title in true English they gette with their merriments, is to be called good fooles: for so haue our graue Fore-fathers euer termed that humorous kinde of iesters: but that which gyueth greatest scope to their scorning humors, is ryming and versing. It is already sayde (and as I think, trulie sayde) it is not ryming and versing, that maketh Poesie. One may bee a Poet without versing, and a versifier without Poetry. But yet, presuppose it were inseparable (as indeede it seemeth *Scaliger* iudgeth) truelie it were an inseparable commendation. For if *Oratio*, next to *Ratio*, Speech next to Reason, bee the greatest gyft

bestowed vpon mortalitie: that can not be praiselesse, which dooth most pollish that blessing of speech, which considers each word, not only (as a man may say) by his forcible qualitie, but by his best measured quantitie, carrying euen in themselfes, a Harmonie: (without (perchaunce) Number, Measure, Order, Proportion, be in our time growne odious.) But lay a side the iust prayse it hath, by beeing the onely fit speech for Musick, (Musick I say, the most diuine striker of the senses :) thus much is vndoubtedly true, that if reading bee foolish, without remembring, memorie being the onely treasurer of knowled[g]e, those words which are fittest for memory, are likewise most conuenient for knowledge.

Now, that Verse farre exceedeth Prose in the knitting vp of the memory, the reason is manifest. The words, (besides theyr delight which hath a great affinity to memory,) beeing so set, as one word cannot be lost, but the whole worke failes: which accuseth it selfe, calleth the remembrance backe to it selfe, and so most strongly confirmeth it; besides, one word so as it were begetting another, as be it in ryme or measured verse, by the former a man shall haue a neere gesse to the follower: lastly, euen they that haue taught the Art of memory, haue shewed nothing so apt for it, as a certaine roome deuided into many places well and thoroughly knowne. Now, that hath the verse in effect perfectly: euery word hauing his naturall seate, which seate, must needes make the words remembred. But what needeth more in a thing so knowne to all men? who is it that euer was a scholler, that doth not carry away some verses of *Virgill*, *Horace*, or *Cato*, which in his youth he learned, and euen to his old age serue him for howrely lessons? but the fitnes it hath for memory, is notably proued by all deliury of Arts: wherein for the most part, from Grammer, to Logick, Mathematick, Physick, and the rest, the rules chiefly necessary to bee borne away, are compiled in verses. So that, verse being in it selfe sweete and orderly, and beeing best for memory, the

onely handle of knowledge, it must be in iest that any man can speake against it. Nowe then goe wee to the most important imputations laid to the poore Poets, for ought I can yet learne, they are these, first, that there beeing many other more fruitfull knowledges, a man might better spend his tyme in them, then in this. Secondly, that it is the mother of lyes. Thirdly, that it is the Nurse of abuse, infecting vs with many pestilent desires: with a Syrens sweetnes, drawing the mind to the Serpents tayle of finfull fancy. And heerein especially, Comedies giue the largest field to erre, as *Chaucer* sayth: howe both in other Nations and in ours, before Poets did soften vs, we were full of courage, giuen to martiall exercises; the pillers of manlyke liberty, and not lulled a sleepe in shady idlenes with Poets pastimes. And lastly, and chiefly, they cry out with an open mouth, as if they out shot *Robin Hood*, that *Plato* banished them out of hys Common-wealth. Truely, this is much, if there be much truth in it. First to the first: that a man might better spend his tyme, is a reason indeede: but it doth (as they say) but *Petere principium*: for if it be as I affirme, that no learning is so good, as that which teacheth and mooueth to vertue; and that none can both teach and moue thereto so much as Poetry: then is the conclusion manifest, that Incke and Paper cannot be to a more profitable purpose employed. And certainly, though a man should graunt their first assumption, it should followe (me thinkes) very unwillingly, that good is not good, because better is better. But I still and vtterly denye, that there is sprong out of earth a more fruitfull knowledge. To the second therefore, that they should be the principall lyars; I aunswere paradoxically, but truely, I thinke truely; that of all VVriters vnder the sunne, the Poet is the least lier: and though he would, as a Poet can scarcely be a lyer, the Astronomer, with his cosen the Geometrician, can hardly escape, when they take vpon them to measure the height of the starres.

How often, thinke you, doe the Phisitions lye, when they auer things, good for sicknesse, which afterwards send *Charon* a great number of foules drown[e]d in a potion before they come to his Ferry. And no lesse of the rest, which take vpon them to affirme. Now, for the Poet, he nothing affirms, and therefore neuer lyeth. For, as I take it, to lye, is to affirme that to be true which is false. So as the other Artists, and especially the Historian, affirming many things, can in the cloudy knowledge of mankinde, hardly escape from many lyes. But the Poet as (I sayd before) neuer affirmeth. The Poet neuer maketh any circles about your imagination, to coniure you to beleue for true what he writes. Hee citeth not authorities of other Histories, but euen for hys entry, calleth the sweete Muses to inspire into him a good inuention: in troth, not labouring to tell you what is, or is not, but what should or should not be: and therefore, though he recount things not true, yet because hee telleth them not for true, he lyeth not, without we will say, that *Nathan*, lyed in his speech, before alledged to *Dauid*. VVhich as a wicked man durst scarce say, so think I, none so simple would say, that *Esope* lyed in the tales of his beasts: for who thinks that *Esope* writ it for actually true, were well worthy to haue his name c[h]ronicked among the beastes hee writeth of.

VVhat childe is there, that comming to a Play, and seeing *Thebes* written in great Letters vpon an olde doore, doth beleue that it is *Thebes*? If then, a man can ariue, at that childes age, to know that the Poets persons and dooings, are but pictures what should be, and not stories what haue beene, they will neuer giue the lye, to things not affirmatiuely, but allegorically, and figuratiuelie written. And therefore, as in Historie, looking for trueth, they goe away full fraught with falsehood: so in Poesie, looking for fiction, they shal vse the narration, but as an imaginatiue groundplot of a profitable inuention.

But heereto is replied, that the Poets gyue names

to men they write of, which argueth a conceite of an actuall truth, and so, not being true, prooues a falshood. And doth the Lawyer lye then, when vnder the names of *John a stile* and *John a noakes*, hee puts his case? But that is easily answered. Theyr naming of men, is but to make theyr picture the more liuely, and not to builde any historie: paynting men, they cannot leaue men namelesse. VVe see we cannot play at Chess, but that wee must giue names to our Chess-men; and yet mee thinks, hee were a very partiall Champion of truth, that would say we lyed, for giuing a peece of wood, the reuerend title of a Bishop. The Poet nameth *Cyrus* or *Aeneas*, no other way, then to shewe, what men of theyr fames, fortunes, and estates, should doe.

Their third is, how much it abuseth mens wit, trayning it to wanton sinfulness, and lustfull loue: for indeed that is the principall, if not the onely abuse I can heare alledged. They say, the Comedies rather teach, then reprehend, amorous conceits. They say, the Lirick, is larded with pafsionate Sonnets. The Elegiack, weepes the want of his mistresse. And that euen to the Heroical, *Cupid* hath ambitiously climed. Alas Loue, I would, thou couldest as well defende thy selfe, as thou canst offende others. I would those, on whom thou doost attend, could eyther put thee away, or yeelde good reason, why they keepe thee. But grant loue of beautie, to be a beastlie fault, (although it be very hard, sith onely man, and no beast, hath that gyft, to discerne beauty.) Grant, that louely name of Loue, to deserue all hatefull reproches: (although euen some of my Maisters the Phylosophers, spent a good deale of theyr Lamp-oyle, in setting foorth the excellencie of it.) Grant, I say, what soeuer they wil haue granted; that not onely loue, but lust, but vanitie, but, (if they list) scurrilitie, possesseth many leaues of the Poets bookes: yet thinke I, when this is granted, they will finde, theyr sentence may with good manners, put the last words foremost: and not say, that Poetrie abuseth mans wit, but that, mans wit abuseth Poetrie.

For I will not denie, but that mans wit may make Poefie, (which fhould be *Eikaſlike*, which ſome learned haue defined, figuring foorth good things,) to be *Phantaſlike*: which doth contrariwiſe, infect the fancie with vnworthy obieſts. As the Painter, that ſhoulde giue to the eye, eyther ſome excellent perſpectiue, or ſome fine picture, fit for building or fortification: or contayning in it ſome notable example, as *Abraham*, ſacrificing his Sonne *Iſaack*, *Iudith* killing *Holofernes*, *David* fighting with *Goliah*, may leaue thoſe, and pleaſe an ill-pleaſed eye, with wanton ſhewes of better hidden matters. But what, ſhall the abuſe of a thing, make the right uſe odious? Nay truely, though I yeeld, that Poefie may not onely be abuſed, but that beeing abuſed, by the reaſon of his ſweete charming force, it can doe more hurt then any other Armie of words: yet ſhall it be ſo far from concludiſg, that the abuſe, ſhould giue reproch to the abuſed, that contrariwiſe it is a good reaſon, that whatſoeuer being abuſed, dooth moſt harme, beeing rightly uſed: (and vpon the right uſe each thing conceiueth his title) doth moſt good.

Doe wee not ſee the ſkill of Phifick, (the beſt rampire to our often-affaulted bodies) beeing abuſed, teach poyſon the moſt violent deſtroyer? Dooth not knowledge of Law, whoſe end is, to euen and right all things being abuſed, grow the crooked foſterer of horrible iniuries? Dooth not (to goe to the higheſt) Gods word abuſed, breed hereſie? and his Name abuſed, become blaſphemie? Truely, a needle cannot doe much hurt, and as truely, (with leaue of Ladies be it ſpoken) it cannot doe much good. With a ſword, thou maiſt kill thy Father, and with a ſword thou maiſt defende thy Prince and Country. So that, as in their calling Poets the Fathers of lyes, they ſay nothing: ſo in this theyr argument of abuſe, they prooue the commendation.

They alledge heere-with, that before Poets beganne to be in price, our Nation, hath ſet their harts delight vpon action, and not vpon imagination: rather doing

things worthy to bee written, then writing things fitte to be done. VVhat that before tyme was, I thinke scarcely *Sphinx* can tell : Sith no memory is so auncient, that hath the precedence of Poetrie. And certaine it is, that in our plainest homelines, yet neuer was the *Albion* Nation without Poetrie. Mary, thys argument, though it bee leaueld against Poetrie, yet is it indeed, a chaine-shot against all learning, or bookishnes, as they commonly tearme it. Of such minde were certaine *Gothes*, of whom it is written, that hauing in the spoile of a famous Citie, taken a fayre librarie : one hangman (bee like fitte to execute the fruites of their wits) who had murthered a great number of bodies, would haue set fire on it : no sayde another, very grauely, take heede what you doe, for whyle they are busie about these toyes, wee shall with more leysure conquer their Countries.

This indeede is the ordinary doctrine of ignorance, and many wordes sometymes I haue heard spent in it : but because this reason is generally againstall learning, aswell as Poetrie ; or rather, all learning but Poetry : because it were too large a digression, to handle, or at least, to superfluous : (sith it is manifest, that all gouernment of action, is to be gotten by knowledg, and knowledge best, by gathering many knowledges, which is, reading,) I onely with *Horace*, to him that is of that opinion,

Iubeo stultum esse libenter :

for as for Poetrie it selfe, it is the freest from thys objection. For Poetrie is the companion of the Campos.

I dare vndertake, *Orlando Furioso*, or honest King *Arthur*, will neuer displease a Souldier : but the quiddity of *Ens*, and *Prima materia*, will hardely agree with a Corset : and therefore, as I said in the beginning, euen Turks and Tartares are delighted with Poets. *Homer* a Greek, florished, before Greece florished. And if to a slight coniecture, a coniecture may be opposed : truly it may seeme, that as by him, their learned men, tooke almost their first light of

knowledge, so their active men, received their first motions of courage. Onlie *Alexanders* example may serue, who by *Plutarch* is accounted of such vertue, that Fortune was not his guide, but his foote-stoole: whose acts speake for him, though *Plutarch* did not: indeede, the Phoenix of warlike Princes. This *Alexander*, left his Schoolemaister, liuing *Aristotle*, behinde him, but tooke deade *Homer* with him: he put the Philosopher *Calisthenes* to death, for his seeming philosophical, indeed mutinous stubbornnes. But the chiefe thing he euer was heard to wish for, was, that *Homer* had been aliue. He well found, he received more brauerie of minde, bye the patterne of *Achilles*, then by hearing the definition of Fortitude: and therefore, if *Cato* misliked *Fuluius*, for carying *Ennius* with him to the fielde, it may be aunswered, that if *Cato* misliked it, the noble *Fuluius* liked it, or els he had not doone it: for it was not the excellent *Cato Vticensis*, (whose authority I would much more haue reuerenced,) but it was the former: in truth, a bitter punisher of faults, but else, a man that had neuer wel sacrificed to the Graces. Hee misliked and cryed out vpon all Greeke learning, and yet being 80. yeeres olde, began to learne it. Be-like, fearing that *Pluto* vnderstood not Latine. Indeeede, the Romaine lawes allowed, no person to be carried to the warres, but hee that was in the Souldiers role: and therefore, though *Cato* misliked his vnmustered person, hee misliked not his worke. And if hee had, *Scipio Nasica* iudged by common consent, the best Romaine, loued him. Both the other *Scipio* Brothers, who had by their vertues no lesse surnames, then of *Asia*, and *Affrick*, so loued him, that they caused his body to be buried in their Sepulcher. So as *Cato*, his authoritie being but against his person, and that aunswered, with so farre greater then himselfe, is heerein of no validitie. But now indeede my burthen is great; now *Plato* his name is layde vpon mee, whom I must confesse, of all Philosophers, I haue euer esteemed most worthy of reuerence, and

with great reason: Sith of all Philosophers, he is the most poetically. Yet if he will defile the Fountaine, out of which his flowing streames haue proceeded, let vs boldly examine with what reasons hee did it. First truly, a man might maliciously obiection, that *Plato* being a Philosopher, was a naturall enemy of Poets: for indeede, after the Philosophers, had picked out of the sweete mysteries of Poetrie, the right discerning true points of knowledge, they forthwith putting it in method, and making a Schoole-arte of that which the Poets did onely teach, by a diuine delightfulness, beginning to spurne at their guides, like vngratefull Prentises, were not content to set vp shops for themselves, but fought by all meanes to discredit their Maisters. VVhich by the force of delight beeing barred them, the lesse they could ouerthrow them, the more they hated them. For indeede, they found for *Homer*, seauen Cities stroue, who should haue him for their Citizen: where many Citties banished Philosophers, as not fitt members to liue among them. For onely repeating certaine of *Euripides* verses, many *Athenians* had their lyues saued of the *Siracusians*: when the *Athenians* themselves, thought many Philosophers, vnwoorthie to liue.

Certaine Poets, as *Simonides*, and *Pindarus* had so preuailed with *Hiero* the first, that of a Tirant they made him a iust King, where *Plato* could do so little with *Dionisius*, that he himselfe, of a Philosopher, was made a slaue. But who should doe thus, I confesse, should requite the obiections made against Poets, with like cauillation against Philosophers, as likewise one should doe, that should bid one read *Phædrus*, or *Symposium* in *Plato*, or the discourse of loue in *Plutarch*, and see whether any Poet doe authorize abhominable filthines, as they doe. Againe, a man might aske out of what Common-wealth *Plato* did banish them? insooth, thence where he himselfe alloweth communitie of women: So as belike, this banishment grewe not for effeminate wantonnes, sith little should poetically Sonnets be hurtfull, when a man might haue what

woman he lifted. But I honor philosophicall instructions, and blesse the wits which bred them : so as they be not abused, which is likewise stretched to Poetrie.

S. *Paule* himselfe, (who yet for the credite of Poets) alledgeth twise two Poets, and one of them by the name of a Prophet, setteth a watch-word vpon Philosophy, indeede vpon the abuse. So dooth *Plato*, vpon the abuse, not vpon Poetrie. *Plato* found fault, that the Poets of his time, filled the worlde, with wrong opinions of the Gods, making light tales of that vnspotted essence ; and therefore, would not haue the youth depraued with such opinions. Heerin may much be said, let this suffice : the Poets did not induce such opinions, but dyd imitate those opinions already induced. For all the Greek stories can well testifie, that the very religion of that time, stood vpon many, and many-fashioned Gods, not taught so by the Poets, but followed, according to their nature of imitation. VVho list, may reade in *Plutarch*, the discourses of *Isis*, and *Osiris*, of the cause why Oracles ceased, of the diuine prouidence : and see, whether the Theologie of that nation, stood not vpon such dreames, which the Poets indeed superstitiously obserued, and truly, (sith they had not the light of Christ,) did much better in it then the Philosophers, who shaking off superstition, brought in Atheisme. *Plato* therefore, (whose authoritie I had much rather iustly conserue, then uniuersally resist,) meant not in general of Poets, in those words of which *Iulius Scaliger* saith *Qua auctoritate, barbari quidam, atque hispidi, abuti velint, ad Poetas é republica exigendos* : but only meant, to driue out those wrong opinions of the Deitie (whereof now, without further law, Christianity hath taken away all the hurtful beliefe,) perchance (as he thought) nourished by the then esteemed Poets. And a man need goe no further then to *Plato* himselfe, to know his meaning : who in his Dialogue called *Ion*, giueth high, and rightly diuine commendation to Poetrie. So as *Plato*, banishing the abuse, not the thing, not banishing it,

but giuing due honor vnto it, shall be our Patron, and not our aduersarie. For indeed I had much rather, (sith truly I may doe it) shew theyr mistaking of *Plato*, (vnder whose Lyons skin they would make an Asse-like braying against Poesie,) then goe about to ouerthrow his authority, whom the wiser a man is, the more iust cause he shall find to haue in admiration: especially, sith he attributeth vnto Poesie, more then my selfe doe; namely, to be a very inspiring of a diuine force, farre aboue mans wit; as in the afore-named Dialogue is apparant.

Of the other side, who wold shew the honors, haue been by the best sort of iudgements granted them, a whole Sea of examples woulde present themselues. *Alexanders*, *Cæsars*, *Scipios*, al fauorers of Poets. *Lelius*, called the Romane *Socrates*, himselfe a Poet: so as part of *Heautontimorumenon* in *Terence*, was supposed to be made by him. And euen the Greek *Socrates*, whom *Apollo* confirmed to be the onely wise man, is sayde to haue spent part of his old tyme, in putting *Efops* fables into verses. And therefore, full euill should it become his scholler *Plato*, to put such words in his Maisters mouth, against Poets. But what need more? *Aristotle* writes the Arte of Poesie: and why if it should not be written? *Plutarch* teacheth the vse to be gathered of them, and how if they should not be read? And who reades *Plutarchs* eyther historie or philosophy, shall finde, hee trymmeth both theyr garments, with gards of Poesie. But I list not to defend Poesie, with the helpe of her vnderling, Historiography. Let it suffice, that it is a fit soyle for prayse to dwell vpon: and what dispraise may set vpon it, is eyther easily ouer-come, or transformed into iust commendation. So that, sith the excellencies of it, may be so easily, and so iustly confirmed, and the low-creeping obiections, so soone troden downe; it not being an Art of lyes, but of true doctrine: not of effeminatenes, but of notable stirring of courage: not of abusing mans witte, but of strengthning mans wit:

not banished, but honored by *Plato*: let vs rather plant more Laurels, for to engarland our Poets heads, (which honor of beeing laureat, as besides them, onely tryumphant Captaines weare, is a sufficient authority, to shewe the price they ought to be had in,) then suffer the ill-fauouring breath of such wrong-speakers, once to blowe vpon the cleere springs of Poesie.

But sith I have runne so long a careere in this matter, me thinks, before I giue my penne a fulle stop, it shalbe but a little more lost time, to inquire, why England, (the Mother of excellent mindes,) should bee growne so hard a step-mother to Poets, vwho certainly in wit ought to passe all other: sith all onely proceedeth from their wit, being indeed makers of themselves, not takers of others. How can I but exclaime,

Musa mihi causas memora, quo numine laeso.

Sweete Poesie, that hath aunciently had Kings, Emperors, Senators, great Captaines, such, as besides a thousand others, *Dauid*, *Adrian*, *Sophocles*, *Germanicus*, not onely to fauour Poets, but to be Poets. And of our neerer times, can present for her Patrons, a *Robert*, king of Sicil, the great king *Francis* of France, King *Iames* of Scotland. Such Cardinals as *Bembus*, and *Bibienna*. Such famous Preachers and Teachers, as *Beza* and *Melancthon*. So learned Philosophers, as *Fracastorius* and *Scaliger*. So great Orators, as *Pontanus* and *Muretus*. So piercing wits, as *George Buchanan*. So graue Counsellors, as besides many, but before all, that *Hospitali* of Fraunce: then whom, (I thinke) that Realme neuer brought forth a more accomplished iudgement: more firmly builded vpon vertue. I say these, with numbers of others, not onely to read others Poesies, but to poetise for others reading, that Poesie thus embraced in all other places, should onely finde in our time, a hard welcome in England, I thinke the very earth lamenteth it, and therefore decketh our Soyle with fewer Laurels then it was accustomed. For heertofore, Poets haue in England also florished. And which

is to be noted, euen in those times, when the trumpet of *Mars* did sounde loudest. And now, that an ouer-faint quietnes should seeme to strew the house for Poets, they are almost in as good reputation, as the *Mountibancks at Venice*. Truly euen that, as of the one side, it giueth great praise to Poesie, which like *Venus*, (but to better purpose) hath rather be troubled in the net with *Mars*, then enioy the homelie quiet of *Vulcan*: so serues it for a peece of a reason, why they are lesse gratefull to idle England, which nowe can scarce endure the payne of a pen. Vpon this, necessarily followeth, that base men, with seruile wits vndertake it: who think it inough, if they can be rewarded of the Printer. And so as *Epaminondas* is sayd, with the honor of his vertue, to haue made an office, by his exercising it, which before was contemptible, to become highly respected: so these, no more but setting their names to it, by their owne disgracefulnes, disgrace the most gracefull Poesie. For now, as if all the Muses were gotte with childe, to bring forth bastard Poets, without any commision, they doe poste ouer the banckes of *Helicon*, tyll they make the readers more weary then Post-horſes: while in the mean tyme, they

Queis meliore luto sinxit præcordia Titan,
are better content, to suppress the out-flowing of their wit, then by publishing them, to bee accounted Knights of the same order. But I, that before euer I durst aspire vnto the dignitie, am admitted into the company of the Paper-blurrs, doe finde the very true cause of our wanting estimation, is want of desert: taking vpon vs to be Poets, in despite of *Pallas*. Nowe, wherein we want desert, were a thanke-worthy labour to expresse: but if I knew, I should haue mended my selfe. But I, as I neuer desired the title, so haue I neglected the meanes to come by it. Onely ouer-mastred by some thoughts, I yeelded an inckie tribute vnto them. Mary, they that delight in Poesie it selfe, should seeke to knowe what they doe, and how they doe; and

especially, looke themselues in an vnflattering Glasse of reason, if they bee inclinable vnto it. For Poesie, must not be drawne by the eares, it must bee gently led, or rather, it must lead. VVhich was partly the cause, that made the auncient-learned affirme, it was a diuine gift, and no humaine skill: fith all other knowledges, lie ready for any that hath strength of witte: A Poet, no industrie can make, if his owne *Genius* bee not carried vnto it: and therefore is it an old Prouerbe, *Orator fit; Poeta nascitur*. Yet confesse I alwayes, that as the firtilest ground must bee manured, so must the highest flying wit, have a *Dedalus* to guide him. That *Dedalus*, they say, both in this, and in other, hath three wings, to beare it selfe vp into the ayre of due commendation: that is, Arte, Imitation, and Exercise. But these, neyther artificiall rules, nor imitatiue patternes, we much cumber our selues withall. Exercise indeede wee doe, but that, very fore-backwardly: for where we should exercise to know, wee exercise as hauing knowne: and so is oure braine deliuered of much matter, which neuer was begotten by knowledge. For, there being two principal parts, matter to be expresseed by wordes, and words to expresse the matter, in neyther, wee vse Arte, or Imitation, rightly. Our matter is *Quodlibet* indeed, though wrongly perfourming *Ouids* verse.

(*Quicquid conabar dicere versus erit:*)

neuer marshalling it into an assured rancke, that almost the readers cannot tell where to finde themselues.

Chaucer, vndoubtedly did excellently in hys *Troylus* and *Cresseid*; of whom, truly I know not, whether to meruaile more, either that he in that mistie time, could see so clearely, or that wee in this cleare age, walke so stumblingly after him. Yet had he great wants, fitte to be forgiuen, in so reuerent antiquity. I account the *Mirroure of Magistrates*, meetely furnished of beautiful parts; and in the Earle of Surries *Liricks*, many things tastig of a noble birth, and worthy of a noble minde. The *Sheapheards Kalender*, hath much Poetrie in his Eglogues: indeede worthy the reading

if I be not deceiued. That same framing of his stile, to an old rustick language, I dare not alowe, sith neyther *Theocritus* in Greeke, *Virgill* in Latine, nor *Sanazar* in Italian, did affect it. Besides these, doe I not remember to haue seene but fewe, (to speake boldely) printed, that haue poetically finnewes in them: for prooffe whereof, let but most of the verses bee put in Prose, and then aske the meaning; and it will be found, that one verse did but beget another, without ordering at the first, what should be at the last: which becomes a confused masse of words, with a tingling sound of ryme, barely accompanied with reason.

Our Tragedies, and Comedies, (not without cause, cried out against,) obseruing rules, neyther of honest ciuilitie, nor of skilfull Poetrie, excepting *Gorboduck*, (againe, I say, of those that I haue seene,) which notwithstanding, as it is full of stately speeches, and well sounding Phrases, clyming to the height of *Seneca* his stile, and as full of notable moralitie, which it doth most delightfully teach; and so obtayne the very end of Poesie: yet in troth it is very defectious in the circumstances; which grieueth mee, because it might not remaine as an exact model of all Tragedies. For it is faulty both in place, and time, the two necessary companions of all corporall actions. For where the stage should alwaies represent but one place, and the vttermost time presupposed in it, should be, both by *Aristotles* precept, and common reason, but one day: there is both many dayes, and many places, inartificially imagined. But if it be so in *Gorboduck*, how much more in al the rest? where you shal haue *Asia* of the one side, and *Affrick* of the other, and so many other vnder-kingdoms, that the Player, when he commeth in, must euer begin with telling where he is: or els, the tale wil not be conceiued. Now ye shal haue three Ladies, walke to gather flowers, and then we must beleue the stage to be a Garden. By and by, we heare newes of shipwracke in the same place, and then wee are to blame, if we accept it not for a Rock.

Vpon the backe of that, comes out a hidious Monster, with fire and smoke, and then the miserable beholders, are bounde to take it for a Caue. VVhile in the mean-time, two Armies flye in, represented with foure swords and bucklers, and then what harde heart will not receiue it for a pitched felde? Now, of time they are much more liberall, for ordinary it is that two young Princes fall in loue. After many trauerces, she is got with childe, deliuered of a faire boy, he is lost, groweth a man, falls in loue, and is ready to get another child, and all this in two hours space: which how absurd it is in fence, euen fence may imagine, and Arte hath taught, and all auncient examples iustified: and at this day, the ordinary Players in Italie, wil not erre in. Yet wil some bring in an example of *Eunuchus* in *Terence*, that containeth matter of two dayes, yet far short of twenty yeeres. True it is, and so was it to be playd in two daies, and so fitted to the time it set forth. And though *Plautus* hath in one place done amisse, let vs hit with him, and not misse with him. But they wil say, how then shal we set forth a story, which containeth both many places, and many times? And doe they not knowe, that a Tragedie is tied to the lawes of Poesie, and not of Historie? not bound to follow the storie, but hauing liberty, either to faine a quite newe matter, or to frame the history, to the most tragicall conueniencie. Againe, many things may be told, which cannot be shewed, if they knowe the difference betwixt reporting and representing. As for example, I may speake, (though I am heere) of *Peru*, and in speech, digresse from that, to the description of *Calicut*: but in action, I cannot represent it without *Pacolets* horse: and so was the manner the Auncients tooke, by some *Nuncius*, to recount thinges done in former time, or other place. Lastly, if they wil represent an history, they must not (as *Horace* saith) beginne *Ab ouo*: but they must come to the principall poynt of that one action, which they wil represent. By example this

will be best expressed. I haue a story of young *Polidorus*, deliuered for safeties sake, with great riches, by his Father *Priamus* to *Polimnestor* king of *Thrace*, in the Trojan war time: Hee after some yeeres, hearing the ouer-throwe of *Priamus*, for to make the treafure his owne, murthereth the child: the body of the child is taken vp *Hecuba*, shee the same day, findeth a flight to bee reuenged most cruelly of the Tyrant: where nowe would one of our Tragedy writers begin, but with the deliuey of the childe? Then should he fayle ouer into *Thrace*, and so spend I know not how many yeeres, and trauaile numbers of places. But where dooth *Euripides*? Euen with the finding of the body, leauing the rest to be tolde by the spirit of *Polidorus*. This need no further to be enlarged, the dullest wit may conceiue it. But besides these grosse absurdities, how all theyr Playes be neither right Tragedies, nor right Comedies: mingling Kings and Clownes, not because the matter so carrieth it: but thrust in Clownes by head and shoulders, to play a part in maiesticall matters, with neither decencie nor discretion. So as neither the admiration and commiseration, nor the right sportfulness, is by their mungrell Tragy-comedie obtained. I know *Apuleius* did some-what so, but that is a thing recounted with space of time, not represented in one moment: and I knowe, the Auncients haue one or two examples of Tragy-comedies, as *Plautus* hath *Amphitrio*: But if we marke them well, we shall find, that they neuer, or very daintily, match Horn-pypes and Funeralls. So falleth it out, that hauing indeed no right Comedy, in that comicall part of our Tragedy, we haue nothing but scurrility, vnwoorthy of any chaste eares: or some extreame shew of doltishnes, indeed fit to lift vp a loude laughter, and nothing els: where the whole tract of a Comedy, shoulde be full of delight, as the Tragedy shoulde be still maintained, in a well raised admiration. But our Comedians, thinke there is no delight without laughter, which is very wrong, for

though laughter may come with delight, yet commeth it not of delight: as though delight should be the cause of laughter, but well may one thing breed both together: nay, rather in themselves, they haue as it were, a kind of contrarietie: for delight we scarcely doe, but in things that haue a conueniencie to our selues, or to the generall nature: laughter, almost euer commeth, of things most disproportioned to our selues, and nature. Delight hath a ioy in it, either permanent, or present. Laughter, hath onely a scornful tickling.

For example, we are rauished with delight to see a faire woman, and yet are far from being moued to laughter. VVe laugh at deformed creatures, wherein certainly we cannot delight. VVe delight in good chaunces, we laugh at mischaunces; we delight to heare the happines of our friends, or Country; at which he were worthy to be laughed at, that would laugh; wee shall contrarily laugh sometimes, to finde a matter quite mistaken, and goe downe the hill agaynst the byas, in the mouth of some such men, as for the respect of them, one shalbe hartely sorry, yet he cannot chuse but laugh; and so is rather pained, then delighted with laughter. Yet deny I not, but that they may goe well together, for as in *Alexanders* picture vvell fet out, wee delight without laughter, and in twenty mad Anticks we laugh without delight: so in *Hercules*, painted with his great beard, and furious countenance, in womans attire, spinning at *Omphales* commaundement, it breedeth both delight and laughter. For the representing of so strange a power in loue, procureth delight: and the scornfulnes of the action, stirreth laughter. But I speake to this purpose, that all the end of the comicall part, bee not vpon such scornfull matters, as stirreth laughter onely: but mixt with it, that delightful teaching which is the end of Poesie. And the great fault euen in that point of laughter, and forbidden plainly by *Aristotle*, is, that they styrrer laughter in sinfull things; which are rather execrable then ridiculous: or in miserable, which are rather to be pittied than scorned.

For what is it to make folkes gape at a wretched Begger, or a beggerly Clowne? or against lawe of hospitality, to iest at straungers, because they speake not English so well as wee doe? what do we learne, sith it is certaine

(Nil habet infelix paupertas durius in se,)

Quam quod ridiculos homines facit.—

But rather a busy louing Courtier, a hartles threatening *Thrafo*. A selfe-wise-seeming schoolemaster. A awry-transformed Traueller. These, if we sawe walke in stage names, which wee play naturally, therein were delightfull laughter, and teaching delightfulness: as in the other, the Tragedies of *Buchanan*, doe iustly bring forth a diuine admiration. But I haue lauished out too many wordes of this play matter. I doe it because as they are excelling parts of Poesie, so is there none so much vsed in England, and none can be more pittifully abused. VVhich like an vnmanerly Daughter, shewing a bad education, causeth her mother Poesies honesty, to bee called in question. Other sorts of Poetry almost haue we none, but that Lyricall kind of Songs and Sonnets: which, Lord, if he gaue vs so good mindes, how well it might be imployed, and with howe heauenly fruite, both priuate and publike, in singing the prayses of the immortall beauty: the immortall goodnes of that God, who gyueth vs hands to write, and wits to conceiue, of which we might well want words, but neuer matter, of which, we could turne our eies to nothing, but we should euer haue new budding occasions. But truely many of such writings, as come vnder the banner of vnresistable loue, if I were a Mistres, would neuer perswade mee they were in loue: so coldely they apply fiery speeches, as men that had rather red Louers writings; and so caught vp certaine swelling phrases, which hang together, like a man which once tolde mee, the winde was at North, VVest, and by South, because he would be sure to name windes enovve: then that in truth they feelee those passions, which easily (as I think) may be bewrayed, by that same forciblenes, or *Energia*, (as the Greekes cal it) of the

writer. But let this be a sufficient, though short note, that wee misse the right vse of the materiall point of Poesie.

Now, for the out-side of it, which is words, or (as I may tearme it) *Diſtion*, it is euen well worſe. So is that honny-flowing Matron Eloquence, apparelled, or rather diſguiſed, in a Curtizan-like painted affectation: one time with ſo farre ſette words, they may ſeeme Monſters: but muſt ſeeme ſtraungers to any poore Engliſh man. Another tyme, with courſing of a Letter, as if they were bound to followe the method of a Dictionary: an other tyme, with figures and flowers, extreamelie winter-ſtarued. But I would this fault were only peculier to Verſifiers, and had not as large poſſeſſion among Proſe-printers; and, (which is to be meruailed) among many Schollers; and, (which is to be pittied) among ſome Preachers. Truly I could wiſh, if at leaſt I might be ſo bold, to wiſh in a thing beyond the reach of my capacity, the diligent imitators of *Tullie*, and *Demofthenes*, (moſt worthy to be imitated) did not ſo much keep, *Nizolian* Paper-bookes of their figures and phraſes, as by attentiuie tranſlation (as it were) deuoure them whole, and make them wholly theirs: For nowe they caſt Sugar and Spice, vpon euery diſh that is ſerued to the table; Like thoſe Indians, not content to weare eare-rings at the fit and naturall place of the eares, but they will thruſt Iewels through their noſe, and lippes becauſe they will be ſure to be fine.

Tullie, when he was to driue out *Cateline*, as it were with a Thunder-bolt of eloquence, often vied that figure of repitition, *Viuit viuit? imo Senatū venit &c.* Indeed, inflamed with a well-grounded rage, hee would haue his words (as it were) double out of his mouth: and ſo doe that artificially, which we ſee men doe in choller naturally. And wee, hauing noted the grace of thoſe words, hale them in ſometime to a familier Epistle, when it were to too much choller to be chollerick. Fow for ſimilitudes, in certaine printed diſcourſes, I thinke all Herbariſts, all ſtories of Beaſts, Foules, and Fiſhes, are riſſed vp, that they come in

multitudes, to waite vpon any of our conceits ; which certainly is as absurd a surfet to the eares, as is possible : for the force of a similitude, not being to prooue any thing to a contrary Disputer, but onely to explaine to a willing hearer, when that is done, the rest is a most tedious prating : rather ouer-swaying the memory from the purpose whereto they were applyed, then any whit informing the iudgement, already eyther satisfied, or by similitudes not to be satisfied. For my part, I doe not doubt, when *Antonius* and *Crassus*, the great forefathers of *Cicero* in eloquence, the one (as *Cicero* testifieth of them) pretended not to know Arte, the other, not to set by it : because with a playne sensiblenes, they might win credit of popular eares ; which credit, is the neereſt ſtep to perſwaſion : which perſwaſion, is the chiefe marke of Oratory ; I doe not doubt (I ſay) but that they vſed theſe tracks very ſparingly, which who doth generally vſe, any man may ſee doth daunce to his owne muſick : and ſo be noted by the audience, more careful to ſpeake curiouſly, then to ſpeake truly.

Vndoubtedly, (at leaſt to my opinion vndoubtedly,) I haue found in diuers ſmally learned Courtiers, a more ſounde ſtile, then in ſome profeſſors of learning : of which I can geſſe no other cauſe, but that the Courtier following that which by praſtiſe hee findeth fitteſt to nature, therein, (though he know it not,) doth according to Art, though not by Art : where the other, vſing Art to ſhew Art, and not to hide Art, (as in theſe caſes he ſhould doe) flyeth from nature, and indeede abuſeth Art.

But what? me thinkes I deſerue to be pounded, for ſtraying from Poetrie to Oratorie : but both haue ſuch an affinity in this wordiſh conſideration, that I thinke this digreſſion, will make my meaning receiue the fuller vnderſtanding : which is not to take vpon me to teach Poets howe they ſhould doe, but onely finding my ſelfe ſick among the reſt, to ſhewe ſome one or two ſpots of the common infection, growne among the moſt part of VVriters : that acknowledging our ſelues ſomewhat awry, we may bend to the right vſe both of

matter and manner ; whereto our language gyueth vs great occasion, beeing indeed capable of any excellent exercising of it. I know, some will say it is a mingled language. And why not so much the better, taking the best of both the other? Another will say it wanteth Grammer. Nay truly, it hath that prayse, that it wanteth not Grammer : for Grammer it might haue, but it needes it not ; beeing so easie of it selfe, and so voyd of those cumberfome differences of Cases, Genders, Moodes, and Tenses, which I thinke was a peece of the Tower of *Babilons* curse, that a man should be put to schoole to learne his mother-tongue. But for the vttering sweetly, and properly the conceits of the minde, which is the end of speech, that hath it equally with any other tongue in the world : and is particularly happy, in compositions of two or three words together, neere the Greeke, far beyond the Latine : which is one of the greatest beauties can be in a language.

Now, of verifying there are two sorts, the one Auncient, the other Moderne : the Auncient marked the quantitie of each filable, and according to that, framed his verse : the Moderne, obseruing onely number, (with some regarde of the accent,) the chiefe life of it, standeth in that lyke founding of the words, which wee call Ryme. VVhether of these be the most excellent, would beare many speeches. The Auncient, (no doubt) more fit for Musick, both words and tune obseruing quantity, and more fit liuely to expresse diuers passions, by the low and lofty founde of the well-weyed filable The latter likewise, with hys Ryme, striketh a certaine musick to the eare : and in fine, sith it dooth delight, though by another way, it obtaines the same purpose : there beeing in eyther sweetnes, and wanting in neither maiestie. Truly the English, before any other vulgar language I know, is fit for both sorts : for, for the Ancient, the Italian is so full of Vowels, that it must euer be cumbred with *Elisions*. The Dutch, so of the other side with Consonants, that they cannot yeeld the sweet flying, fit for

a Verſe. The French, in his whole language, hath not one word, that hath his accent in the laſt ſilable, ſauing two, called *Antepenultima*, and little more hath the Spaniſh: and therefore, very graceleſſy may they uſe *Dactiles*. The Engliſh is ſubiect to none of theſe defects.

Nowe, for the ryme, though wee doe not obſerue quantity, yet wee obſerue the accent very precisely: which other languages, eyther cannot doe, or will not doe ſo abſolutely. That *Cæſura*, or breathing place in the middeſt of the verſe, neither Italian nor Spaniſh haue, the French, and we, neuer almoſt ſayle of. Laſtly, euen the very ryme it ſelfe, the Italian cannot put in the laſt ſilable, by the French named the Masculine ryme, but ſtill in the next to the laſt, which the French call the Female; or the next before that, which the Italians terme *Sdrucchiola*. The example of the former, is *Buono, Suono*, of the *Sdrucchiola, Femina, Semina*. The French, of the other ſide, hath both the Male, as *Bon, Son*, and the Female, as *Plaiſe, Taiſe*. But the *Sdrucchiola*, hee hath not: where the Engliſh hath all three, as *Due, True, Father, Rather, Motion, Potion*; with much more which might be ſayd, but that I finde already, the triflingnes of this diſcourſe, is much too much enlarged. So that ſith the euer-praiſe-worthy Poefie, is full of vertue-breeding delightfulnes, and voyde of no gyfte, that ought to be in the noble name of learning: ſith the blames laid againſt it, are either falſe, or feeble: ſith the cauſe why it is not eſteemed in Englande, is the fault of Poet-apes, not Poets: ſith laſtly, our tongue is moſt fit to honor Poefie, and to bee honored by Poefie, I coniure you all, that haue had the euill lucke to reade this incke-waſting toy of mine, euen in the name of the nyne Muſes, no more to ſcorne the ſacred miſteries of Poefie: no more to laugh at the name of Poets, as though they were next inheritours to Fooles: no more to ieſt at the reuerent title of a Rymer: but to beleeu with *Ariſtotle*, that they were the auncient Treasuſers, of the Græcians Diuinity. To beleeu with *Bembus*, that they were firſt bringers

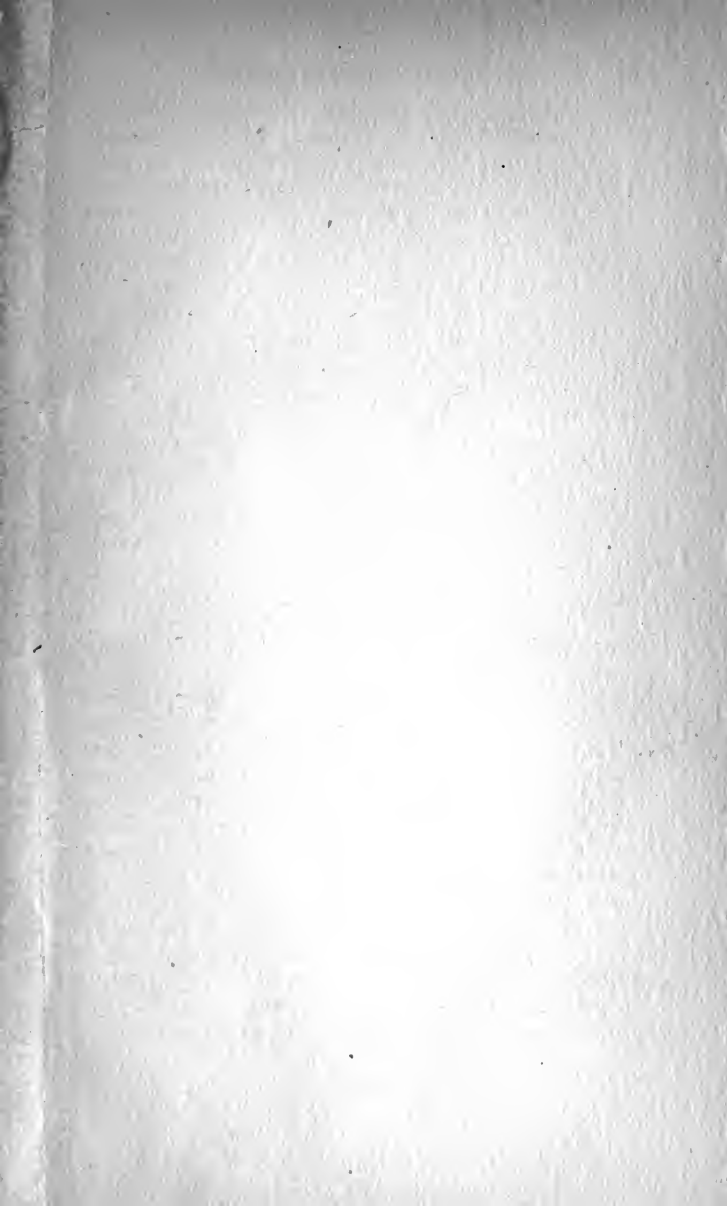
in of all ciuilitie. To beleeeue with *Scaliger*, that no Philosophers precepts can sooner make you an honest man, then the reading of *Virgill*. To beleeeue with *Clauserus*, the Translator of *Cornutus*, that it pleased the heauenly Deitie, by *Hesiod* and *Homer*, vnder the vayle of fables, to giue vs all knowledge, Logick, Rethorick, Philosophy, naturall, and morall; and *Quid non*? To beleeeue with me, that there are many misteries contained in Poetrie, which of purpose were written darkely, leaft by prophane wits, it should bee abused. To beleeeue with *Landin*, that they are so beloued of the Gods, that whatsoeuer they write, proceeds of a diuine fury. Lastly, to beleeeue themselues, when they tell you they will make you immortall, by their verses.

Thus doing, your name shal florish in the Printers shoppes; thus doing, you shall bee of kinne to many a poetickall Preface; thus doing, you shall be most fayre, most ritch, most wise, most all, you shall dwell vpon Superlatiues. Thus dooing, though you be *Liber-tino patre natus*, you shall suddenly grow *Hercules proles*:

Si quid mea carmina possunt.

Thus doing, your soule shal be placed with *Dantes Beatrix*, or *Virgils Anchises*. But if, (sie of such a but) you be borne so neere the dull making *Cataphract* of *Nilus*, that you cannot heare the Plannet-like Musick of Poetrie, if you haue so earth-creeping a mind, that it cannot lift it selfe vp, to looke to the sky of Poetry: or rather, by a certaine rusticall disdaine, will become such a Mome, as to be a *Momus* of Poetry: then, though I will not wish vnto you, the Asses eares of *Midas*, nor to bee driuen by a Poets verses, (as *Bubonax* was) to hang himselfe, nor to be rimed to death, as is sayd to be doone in Ireland: yet thus much curse I must send you, in the behalfe of all Poets, that while you liue, you liue in loue, and neuer get fauour, for lacking skill of a *Sonnet*: and when you die, your memory die from the earth, for want of an *Epitaph*.

FINIS.





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Sidney, (Sir) Philip
An apologie for poetrie

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